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## **Middridge Parish Council**

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting  
held at 6.30pm on Monday, 3<sup>rd</sup> July, 2023  
in Middridge Village Hall

**Present:** Cllr H Howe (Chair),  
Cllrs P Dicker, T Towers and R Carr

**Official:** T Bellas (Locum Parish Clerk)

Mr P Makinson – Middridge Village Association

### **65/23 NOTICE OF MEETING**

The Notice convening the meeting was taken as read.

### **66/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None received

### **67/23 DECLARATIONS**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **68/24 Parish Council Vacancy**

Members were advised that following a vacancy in Middridge Parish, Durham County Council did not receive the requisite number of signatories to call an election for the vacancy and that the vacancy could now be filled by co-option.

It was proposed by Councillor T Towers and seconded by Councillor P Dicker that Roger Howe be co-opted onto Middridge Parish Council.

**Resolved** that Roger Howe be co-opted as a Councillor for Middridge Parish.

### **69/23 Matters of Public Interest**

Cllr T Towers advised Members of a funding application submitted, with the support of Groundwork, to the Great Aycliffe and Middridge AAP to host a Coffee morning each week to support residents, who are socially isolated and vulnerable. The intention is to create a friendly environment to enjoy refreshments, social activity and the company of other people.

It was also reported that funding was being sought from County Councillor budgets to host a Christmas event within the Middridge Village Hall which

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would encourage families from the village and the Eldon Whins to meet and enjoy festive activities.

### **Resolved that:**

1. the verbal report be received.
2. subject to funding being secured, that a Working Party be established to co-ordinate Christmas activities.

### **70/23 Minutes**

**Resolved** that the Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> May, 2023 be approved and signed by the Chair as a true record.

### **71/23 Matters arising from the Minutes**

There were no matters arising from the Minutes.

### **72/23 Road Traffic**

Members were advised of an email sent to Durham County Council requesting a speed indicator device for Middridge Village and of a reply received together with the suggestion that a community speed watch scheme be arranged.

Councillor Carr updated Members on speeding cars entering Elder Gardens from the roundabout and the potential dangers.

There was also parking issues on the Estate causing a visibility issue to drivers.

### **Resolved that**

1. the verbal report be received.
2. the Police be asked to organise a Community Speed watch for Middridge Village.
3. parking issues within Eldon Whins be report to Police for action.

### **73/23 Anti-social Behaviour and Policing**

Members were advised of dog fouling issues within the Eldon Whins housing development and of the lack of dog and litter bins. It was acknowledged that the full housing development had not been completed by the developers and this may constitute to the delay in installing additional bins.

The Chair advised Members that a draft press release had been sent to members for comment relating to the issue of dog fouling.

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### **Resolved that:**

1. the verbal report be received.
2. that Durham County Council be approached with regards to the installation of additional dog and litter bins to serve the area.

### **74/23 “The Paddock” Wildflower Grassland**

Members were updated on the history of the wildflower grassland and the lengthy period of time for a lease to be arranged with the Allotment Association.

**Resolved** that Durham County Council be again contacted with a view to progressing the extension of a lease with the Allotment Association.

### **75/23 Grounds Maintenance and General Repairs**

#### **a) Village Green**

Members were informed that the village green grass had been cut.

#### **b) Parish Paths**

The Chair updated members on the concerns of the current horticultural maintenance contractor with regards to dog fouling and its impact on employees. A discussion followed on future maintenance arrangements for the Parish.

#### **c) Southside Bus Shelter**

The project to be deferred until 2024.

#### **d) Tree Maintenance**

**Resolved** to contact Olivers Tree Services to arrange a date for a tree survey

**Resolved** that the verbal reports be noted.

### **76/23 Children’s Play Area**

It was reported that work had started on the play area, and this was near to completion.

Arrangements were progressing for the official opening.

**Resolved** that the verbal report be noted.

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### 77/23 Neighbourhood Plan

A discussion took place on the progress of the Neighbourhood Plan and, in particular, forthcoming payments on the first stage of the final part of the plan.

**Resolved** that the verbal update not noted.

### 78/23 Accounts

The Schedule of Accounts for Payment was considered.

<b>Payee</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Sum</b>
Tony Towers *	Payments for Village Green Tubs	£195.00
Artemis Adjusting Ltd *	Bus Shelter Repair VAT payment	£4,561.33
Clerks	Clerks' April – June Salaries	£576.00
HMRC	Clerks' Income Tax	£144.00
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£5,476.33</b>

**RESOLVED** that the Accounts awaiting payment and accounts paid advance be approved.

### 79/23 GAMP & CDALC

An update was provided to Members.

**Resolved** that the information be received.

### 80/23 Planning Applications

There were no planning applications.

**Resolved** that the Council make contact with the Middridge Quarry Action Group to discuss any further action should the applicant appeal against the refusal of planning permission by Durham County Council.

### 81/23 General Correspondence

None received.

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**82/23 Other Matters**

The Chair updated Members on the current job vacancy of Parish Clerk for Middridge.

**RESOLVED that:**

1. the verbal report be noted.
2. contact be made with the job applicant and a revised job description be forwarded.
3. contact be made with the Council's HR consultants on further advice on interviewing for the position of Parish Clerk.

**83/23 Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Monday, 4<sup>th</sup> September, 2023 at 6.30pm.

Chair .....

Date .....