

APPROVED

Middridge Parish Council

Minutes of Council Meeting

Monday
5th JULY 2021

Time: 6.45 pm

Present: Cllrs A D Jordan (Acting Chair), E Hayman, P Dicker

In Attendance: Cllrs Tony Stubbs, David Sutton-Lloyd, Michael Stead (DCC)
David Batey, Ann Clarke.

Official: T Towers (Clerk)

65/21 NOTICE OF MEETING

The Notice convening the Meeting was taken as read.

66/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs Harold Howe (Chair) and Rebecca Carr.

67/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None declared

68/21 COUNCIL MATTERS

- (a) Parish Clerk has resigned due to unforeseen family commitments. Tracey Bellas agreed to become Clerk for a 6 month period subject to approval from her current employers. Parish Clerk vacancy to be advertised via CDALC in due course.
- (b) Council approved a memorial plaque for Wally Mellors at £60.
- (c) Invoice for Councillor training has been received, and was approved by Council.

69/21 MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

(a) Litter on the village green directly outside the "Bay Horse" mentioned. It was thought timely to remind the landlady Middridge village green is a registered village green and the green outside the "Bay Horse" should be kept tidy ensuring litter is removed.

Action Point - ADJ to have a quiet word with the landlady

(b) The stile on parish path 8 which crosses the field adjoining parish path 20 has a piece of wood attached to the top of the stile which restricts access to the less mobile. A kissing gate was suggested instead of the stile or at least the piece of wood should be removed. Paul Dicker is looking into contacting interested parties and returning stile to it's pre modified state.

Action Point – Paul Dicker

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(c) Steps from the highway just outside Middridge Parish adjacent to the Community Woodland have washed away exposing wooden obstacles which are dangerous. Steps were erected by a London Property Developer who owns the Community Woodland. As the steps are on the verge the property developer is denying any liability for remedial works.

Action point – Tony Stubbs will raise this with DCC roadworks to see if anything can be done.

(d) Concerns raised regarding the increasing level of heavy goods vehicles travelling through the village, in particular waste lorries and car transporters. Factors include the 7.5 ton weight limit prohibiting traffic through School Aycliffe and an unsuitable for HGV sign at Eldon resulting in increased flow through Middridge.

DCC David Sutton-Lloyd has requested DCC traffic department to investigate. A site meeting has taken place and the issue is under investigation.

(e) Speeding through the village was raised, MPC have raised this issue numerous times with DCC. DCC Tony Stubbs advised a traffic survey is to be carried out by DCC in an attempt to curb speeding traffic. It would be helpful if MPC could send DCC Stubbs copies of any correspondence between DCC and the Parish Council.

Suggestions were made to combat speeding, the consensus was residents should initially be consulted as to their preference with a leaflet offering various solutions. Once the leaflets have been collected we can see which measure is preferred overall. It was agreed before consulting residents we should initially conduct our own traffic survey counting / videoing traffic through the village. This will highlight trends, a form is being drawn up and a survey will take place shortly.

DCC David Sutton- Lloyd advised Aycliffe Village have had success in reducing speeding and he will send contact details to the Parish Clerk to investigate further.

Action Points – ADJ to locate earlier correspondence between MPC and DCC and send copies to Tony Stubbs. Clerk to make contact with Aycliffe Village combating speeding.

(f) Mention made of Section 106 monies and it was asked why Middridge cannot access the monies?. It was explained DCC allocate 106 money and applications have to be made. In theory Middridge can make bids by submitting proposals. The release of Section 106 monies is dependent upon hitting defined criteria for example in the case of Keepmoat homes the numbers of houses sold trigger release of 106 monies 1st release when 87 houses are sold, 2nd release when 155 houses are sold and 3rd release when 256 house are sold.

(g) A vehicle has been parked in the lay by adjacent to the village postbox a question was raised if this was legal. It is legal to park in the lay by unless there is signage specifying otherwise. As no such signage is evident there is nothing to stop this practice from happening.

70/21 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES.

None.

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71/21 POLICING

Tony Stubbs has recently had a meeting with the police regarding Anti Social Behaviour. It is recommended anyone coming across ASB immediately reports any such activities to the police. DCC Councillors are having a further meeting with the police on the 6th of July and ASB will again be raised as a topic for discussion.

72/21 "ELDON WHINS" DEVELOPMENT

Meeting held between MPC, DCC David Sutton-Lloyd, Durham County Planning Office and Keepmoat homes on 11th June 2021.

Play area to be constructed approx 2023 – 2024 as insurance issues with Public Liability. The play area can only be built when the management company take over the site which will be nearer the finishing time for the estate.

The point where the first stage of Section 106 money will be released is when 87 houses reach completion stage. Currently numbers total 53, second stage is when 155 houses reach completion stage and third stage is where 256 house reach completion stage.

Tarmacing of roads commenced 14th June . Further tarmacing to take place and MPC will be kept informed of progress.

Keepmoat to tidy areas around verges after which home owners are liable for upkeep. No dog fouling sign to be erected at edge of play area and red brick shared driveways to be blocked off with no access to Chestnut Way.

Keepmoat will landscape areas in front of the estate in near future as a goodwill gesture. Monies paid for ground management are to be placed in "start up pot" until Kingston (management company) take over nearer the time of the estate being finished. They will then invoice but use money from the "pot" to start works off.

Issue of flooding discussed, Persimmon are liable for area with worst flooding so this issue to be redirected to Persimmon in due course.

Persimmon are liable for main road up until the start of the fence in front of houses 35-39 Chestnut Way/ near roundabout. Gap in fence has been repaired, any issues further up the road need to be discussed with Persimmon.

Persimmon roundabout should not be used by abnormal loads / large lorries as other routes are available.

We still await a response from Persimmon to our queries regarding the public art. Rumours of a nearby incinerator plant are unfounded as the plant is planned for Newton Aycliffe near the Hitachi Plant on the industrial estate well out of Middridge Parish.

73/21 "THE PADDOCK" WILDFLOWER GRASSLAND

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Section 106 funding – Allotments Society proposing an extension to current allotments leaving an area which could be used for grassland. Ecologist believes most similar projects either reduced or made no difference to rates of ASB.

Action Point - Copies of ecologists report to be sent to DCC councillors -Clerk

74/21 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE AND GENERAL REPAIRS.

(a) Village Green, new bench seat dedicated to Wally Mellows and 2 flower tubs to be placed along Northside to protect area of green which is to be re turfed imminently by Northumbrian Water. Four new tubs now in place on the green. Clerk to arrange payments to tub holders for tub maintenance.

(b) Paths, awaiting estimate for repairs to stile on footpath 7, funding agreed by Parish Paths

(c) Quarry, meeting held 25th June between MPC, DCC Tony Stubbs, DCC rights of way officer, police and Wards (owners of quarry)
Intention is to make the quarry attractive by landscaping adding earth embankments and clearing out undergrowth to attract the general public. Will involve filling the area with spoil from nearby building sites. Wards to meet Nature England to ascertain exact position of fossils which will be left untouched. Suggestion periodic Zoom calls are made with all parties to monitor progress.

(d) Bus Shelters, now determined MPC liability, proposed and agreed we add both shelters to current policy at a cost of approximately £45. No addition premium due this year (first year of a 3 year deal). Sum insured for both bus shelters is £6100.00, Council approved proposition and clerk to arrange cover asap.

Action point - Clerk

75/21 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

None of interest.

76/21 CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA

Repairs undertaken to wooden cabin slide, awaiting start date for repairs / modifications to climbing frame and soft play area under junior swings.

Picnic table beyond economic repair replacement sourced which is recycled plastic and long lasting in sum of £320.00 plus vat. Council agreed to replace picnic table at this price.

77/21 ROAD TRAFFIC

Awaiting the police to return to us so no progress on this front. DCC have meeting with police where this issue will be discussed in an attempt to resolve matters.

GAMP Community Roadwatch, Katy Milne has left Greenfield Arts however able deputies and project all ready to commence in 2022.

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78/21 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Nothing to report.

79/21 ACCOUNTS

Proposal to support the Great North Air Ambulance; Councillors agreed to make a donation of £50 to this charity.

It was **RESOLVED** that the following payments be approved for payment.

| Payee | Purpose | Sum |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Peter Craggs * | Cabin/Slide Repairs | £286.00 |
| Tony Towers | Clerk's Apr-Jun Salary | £524.00 |
| HMRC | Clerk's Apr-Jun Tax | £131.00 |
| Tony Towers | Clerk's Expenses | £125.00 |
| Npower Business Solutions | Xmas Electricity Supply | £341.86 |
| Woodham Community Association | Replacement Defibrillator Battery | £213.40 |
| CDALC | New Councilor Training | £30.00 |
| | TOTAL | £1651.26 |

NOTE – with the agreement of Parish Councillors, Invoices marked * have already been paid.

80/21 GAMP & CDALC

GAMP funding has been substantially increased, and Alan Jordan is now a member of the Funding Sub- Group Panel to investigate the best ways to attract project proposals.

Amicable meeting held of the GAMP Local councils Committee agreeing:-

- (a) Alan Jordan to become Chair of the Committee
- (b) Middridge (ADJ) will represent the Committee on the GAMP Board for the next year.
- (c) GATC will represent the Committee on the CDALC Executive Committee for the next year.

81/21 GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

None received

82/21 OTHER MATTERS

- (a) Website nothing to report.
- (b) EV Charging points is now a decision for the MVA to make who are holding a meeting shortly.
- (C) Village Hall Car-Park gates, currently awaiting a quotation the final decision is up to the MVA as to whether to proceed.

83/21 ADDITIONAL ITEMS

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Litter picking held 4th of July not a lot of litter to collect. Suggestion DCC's litter collection team had recently visited the village. Suggested we clarify with DCC when they collect litter from the village and we can then plan future litter picks in-between DCC visits to maximise effectiveness. Tony Stubbs to liaise with DCC to clarify appropriate dates.

Action point - Tony Stubbs

It was pointed out Charles Row are shortly to change to LED lighting

84/21 NEXT MEETING

The next Meeting of the Parish Council will be on Monday, 6th September, starting at 6.45 pm.