

APPROVED

## **Middridge Parish Council**

### **Minutes of Council Meeting**

**Village Hall,  
Middridge**

**Monday  
6<sup>th</sup> January 2020**

**Time: 6.45 pm**

**Present:** Cllrs H Howe (Chair), S Smith, W Mellors, H Alexander & P Makinson

**In Attendance:** Cllr J Clare (DCC)

**Official:** A Jordan (Clerk)

#### **1/20 NOTICE OF MEETING**

The Notice convening the Meeting was taken as read.

#### **2/20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None

#### **3/20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

#### **4/20 MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST**

None

#### **5/20 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting of 4<sup>th</sup> November 2019 were accepted, and signed by the Chair as a true record.

#### **6/20 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

None

#### **7/20 POLICING**

The dates of the new PACT Meetings in Middridge were noted.

#### **8/20 "ELDON WHINS" DEVELOPMENTS & THE COUNTY PLAN**

The new Roundabout was finally opened just before Christmas. Councillors expressed their concern about how long the construction took, and some of the problems which occurred.

Concerns have also been raised regarding whether the Roundabout is wide enough for two lanes of traffic, and the adverse camber in places. Cllr J Clare said that he was organising a Meeting with the DCC Highways Department to discuss these issues.

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It was agreed that copies of the Notice to new Residents should be supplied to the Sales Office at "Elder Gardens".

**Action:** Clerk

### 9/20 "THE PADDOCK" WILD-FLOWER GRASSLAND

David Harker chaired a first Meeting of the new Working Group which was well attended by interested Residents. There was widespread concern that opening up "the Paddock" might allow its use by undesirable elements, and any proposals to alter "the Paddock" would need to include sensible security measures. Tammy Morris-Hale of the DCC Ecology Department gave a short presentation on the proposed Wild-flower Grassland, and following questions from Residents, agreed to see what could be done regarding security.

There were some Residents who would prefer to see "the Paddock" remain as it is, whilst others were prepared to consider the proposed Wild-flower Grassland, provided their concerns regarding security were addressed. It was agreed that no final decision should be made until all Residents have been given a chance to express their opinion.

David Harker has kindly offered to work with DCC to investigate a number of possible alternative ideas for "the Paddock", and Councillors agreed to this proposal.

Cllr J Clare said that DCC would not impose anything on the Parish. However, he noted that if the Section 106 money for an Ecology Project were not used for this purpose, it might be used elsewhere (outside the Parish). He also pointed out that the Parish Council would need to consider the likely high cost of maintenance for the proposed Wild-flower Grassland.

There is a large sum of Section 106 money available for improvements to the Allotments, and Cllr J Clare kindly agreed to assist the Allotment Association in investigating what might be done with this funding.

### 10/20 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE & GENERAL REPAIRS

#### (a) Walkers Lane Road & Parking

Cllr Sue Smith expressed concern that the DCC Road-sweepers do not operate in Walkers Lane; Cllr J Clare kindly agreed to investigate.

#### (b) Parish Paths

Nothing to report.

#### (c) Village Green Maintenance

Millennium Hedge – Jonathan Pounder has completed the agreed work. He has suggested that the Hedge would be improved by introducing a number of stakes, and the cost of this is being investigated.

**Action:** Clerk

**RESOLVED** that Jonathan Pounder be paid an Honorarium of £150.

Repairs to the Bench on the Village Green with a rotted Seat are in hand.

Deer are still eating the bark of the trunks of the Trees on "the Dock". Ian Hayman has kindly offered to put down a Salt Lick, which he thinks might stop this problem.

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**11/20 PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

None

**12/20 CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA**

The new Noticeboard for the Play Area has been installed.

The Clerk's Monthly Inspection Report was approved.

**13/20 ROAD-TRAFFIC**

Following a number of queries, a revised Neighbourhood Budget Application for the proposed "Community Road Watch" Project has been submitted to GAMP.

**Action:** Clerk.

Following a Meeting with the DCC Highways Department, a significant amount of work has been done to reduce the regular flooding of Middridge Road near Blind Lane.

**14/20 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (NP)**

Nothing to report due to pressure of other business.

**15/20 ACCOUNTS**

**RESOLVED** that the Parish Council's Council Tax for the 2020/21 Financial Year be increased by 3%.

**Action:** Clerk

**RESOLVED** that the following Accounts be approved for payment:-

Payee	Purpose	Sum
Hayfields Contracting Ltd	Village Green Maintenance	£2,280.00
Lyndhurst Nurseries	Christmas Tree	£240.00
A. D. Jordan	Clerk's Oct -Dec Salary	£249.87
HMRC	Clerk's Oct -Dec Tax	£166.80
J. Pounder	Millennium Hedge Maintenance	£150.00
John 'the Handyman'	Play Area Noticeboard	£175.00
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£3,261.67</b>

The Clerk stated that in order to pay for the remaining committed expenditure for the 2019/20 Financial Year, it may be necessary to transfer money from the Parish Council's Business Reserve Account to their Current Account this year. In any case this transfer would be necessary in the 2020/21 Financial Year, in order to fund the second payment for the Walkers Lane Street Lighting SLA. He further stated that the Parish Council's Finances would be under considerable strain next year, and Councillors should be wary of taking on any non-essential additional Expenditure. This situation is being closely monitored, and Councillors will be advised when action is required.

**Action:** Clerk

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### 16/20 GAMP & CDALC

GAMP – the next Board Meeting is on 28<sup>th</sup> January.

CDALC – nothing to report.

### 17/20 GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

None

### 18/20 OTHER MATTERS

#### (a) Remembrance Sunday & Christmas Arrangements

Councillors considered that this year's Christmas Tree was a great improvement on the previous year's. Following a number of initial problems with the Electricity Supply for the Christmas Tree Lights, all is now working satisfactorily.

#### (b) Parish Council Meeting Dates

Next year's Parish Council Meeting Dates were agreed.

**Action:** Clerk

#### (c) Clerk's Telephone Expenses

Due to the abnormally high volume of telephone calls required by recent Parish Council business, the Clerk's Telephone Costs increased significantly. Following a discussion of possible alternatives, it was agreed that the simplest way to handle this would be for the Clerk to include this additional Cost in his annual Expenses Claim (to be submitted for the March Parish Council Meeting).

**Action:** Clerk

#### (d) Village Website

The software used to maintain the Village Website is now 10 years old, does not cater for Smart Phones, and is preventing Cllr P Makinson from upgrading his PC; it was agreed that the Cost of suitable modern replacement software should be investigated. There have also been problems recently with the payments to BT for Website Hosting, and it was also agreed that the possibility of transferring to an alternative Internet Service Provider should be investigated.

**Action:** Cllr P Makinson

### 19/20 ADDITIONAL ITEMS

None

### 20/20 NEXT MEETING

The next Meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Monday, 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2020, at 6.45 pm. The Chair closed the Meeting at 8.40 pm.