

Middridge Parish Council

Minutes of the Council Meeting
held at 6.45pm on Monday 7th March, 2022
in Middridge Village Hall

Present: Cllr Alan Jordan (Chair), Cllr Paul Dicker and Cllr Emma Hayman

In attendance: Cllr David Sutton-Lloyd (DCC), T Towers and 3 members of the public

Official: T Bellas (Acting Parish Clerk)

7/22 NOTICE OF MEETING

The Notice convening the meeting was taken as read.

8/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs H Howe and Rebecca Carr and County Councillor T Stubbs.

9/22 DECLARATIONS

There were no declarations of interest.

10/22 COUNCIL MATTERS

The Chair updated members on the employment outcome of the previous Parish Clerk and introduced T Bellas (Acting Parish Clerk) to the meeting.

Resolved that the above information be received.

11/22 MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

There were no items to discuss

12/22 MINUTES

It was proposed by Cllr P Dicker and seconded by Cllr E Hayman and

Resolved that the following minutes of meetings be accepted as a true record

- a. Meeting of the Parish Council held on 6th September 2021

- b. Extra-ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on 25th October 2021
- c. Extra-ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on 22nd November 2021
- d. Extra-ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on 13th December 2021
- e. Extra-ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on 10th January 2022
- f. Extra-ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on 16th January, 2022

13/22 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters to discuss as all matters would be discussed under the relevant agenda item.

14/22 MIDDRIIDGE QUARRY

The Chair updated members on matters relating to Middridge Quarry and informed the meeting that no formal planning application had been submitted to the Planning Department, Durham County Council.

The Chair further informed members of a meeting to be held with Ward Brothers Steel Limited (owners of Middridge Quarry) on 16th March, 2022 – the meeting to be attended by Parish and County Councillors. Discussion took place on the purpose of the meeting and attendance.

Members of the public voiced their concern and objection to any planning application to be submitted by Ward Brothers Steel Limited to infill the quarry with inert waste and outlined various road safety and environmental concerns as well as the detrimental impact on residents of Middridge.

Concern was also expressed regarding a traffic monitor placed on Walkers Lane without the prior permission of Durham County Council.

Members of the public participating at the meeting indicated that an ‘Action Group’ be formed comprising of members of the public and to link with the Middridge Parish Council to provide information.

The Chair informed the meeting that Middridge Parish Council supported the views of residents and would keep them informed of discussions held with Ward Brothers Steel Limited after the arranged meeting.

An update was provided by Cllr David Sutton-Lloyd.

Resolved that:

1. the verbal update be received.
2. the concern of residents in their objection to any potential planning application to infill Middridge Quarry be noted.
3. the Parish Council update residents and the 'Action Group' following the meeting on 16th March, 2022.

15/22 ROAD TRAFFIC

The Chair and Cllr David Sutton-Lloyd reported to the members on the request for a speed monitor to be sited in the village.

Concern was expressed at the amount of heavy vehicles travelling through the village and the need to look at alternative routes.

Resolved that:

1. The update provided by the Chair and Cllr David Sutton-Lloyd be noted
2. Cllr David Sutton-Lloyd feed back the concern of the Parish Council to officers at Durham County Council regarding heavy vehicles travelling through the village and the impact on infrastructure together with a request that alternative routes for these vehicles be sought.

16/22 ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AND POLICING

Cllr Emma Hayman provided a verbal update to members on anti-social behaviour and policing together with an explanation on the installation of gates to the car park area associated with the village hall.

Resolved that:

1. the verbal report be received.
2. that contact details for the PCSO Officer dealing with Middridge and Community Safety Officer, Durham County Council be provided to members for future reference.

17/22 "The PADDOCK" WILDFLOWER GRASSLAND

Cllr P Dicker provided an update on the wildflower grassland project together with new lease arrangements for allotments and a licence to access the paddock area.

Resolved that:

1. the verbal update be received

2. that the proposal to set up a 'Friends of the Paddock' group be supported.

18/22 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE AND GENERAL REPAIRS

- a) Village Green - the Chair reported on the planting of a rowan tree on the village green.
- b) Parish Paths - stone stile repairs had been completed.
- c) Tree Maintenance - discussion took place on the trees situation on the village green and the requirement for a tree survey.

Resolved that the verbal reports be noted.

19/22 CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA

Cllr P Dicker updated members on a quote received for new playground equipment and repairs to the safety surfacing.

A discussion took place on potential Section 106 money available for the purpose of replacing playground equipment.

Resolved that:

1. the verbal update be received
2. further information be sought on the allocation of Section 106 money for new play equipment within the children's play area.

20/22 ELDON WHINS DEVELOPMENTS

It was reported that excess water was present on the public highway and presented a danger to road users.

Resolved that:

1. the verbal report be noted
2. that Cllr David Sutton-Lloyd arrange a meeting with residents to listen to their concerns regarding excess water on the public highway and report back to Durham County Council.

21/22 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

It was noted there was currently no progress to report.

22/21 ACCOUNTS

The Chair reported that there would be no increase in the precept levied by Middridge Parish Council for 2022/23.

The Chair provided information on the appointment of the Parish Council's Internal Auditor for the 2021/22 Accounts.

Payee	Purpose	Sum
FS&DR *	Annual Membership Fee	£50.00
Royal British Legion *	Wreaths and Crosses	£40.00
Complete Weed Control *	Village Green Maintenance	£2,280.00
Croner *	HR Services	£145.02
D Johnson *	Christmas Tree	£324.00
Croner *	HR Services	£145.02
Croner *	Face2Face Services	£84.50
Complete Weed Control *	Christmas Tree Installation	£300.00
DCC *	Walkers Lane SLA	£373.38
Woodham Community Assoc. *	Defibrillator Pads	£60.00
Paul Dicker *	Tree for Village Green	£69.94
DMALAW *	Ex-Clerk's Solicitors	£300.00
Ex-Clerk *	Severance Payment	£622.00
HMRC *	Ex-Clerk's Tax	£128.00
Wix	Parish Website Maintenance	£86.40
	TOTAL	£5,008. 26

NOTE - with the agreement of Parish Councillors, Invoices marked * have already been paid, so only formal approval is required.

NOTE - from 1st February 2022, and going forwards, payments to Croner for their services are by Direct Debit, and thus do not appear in the Schedule of Accounts for Payment.

It was proposed by Cllr P Dicker and seconded by Cllr E Hayman and

Resolved that:

1. The accounts awaiting payment and accounts paid in advance be noted and approved.
2. The appointment of the Parish Council's Internal Auditor for the 2021/22 Accounts be approved.

The Chair presented a report to Members on discussions held with CDALC on double taxation issues and the GAMP Towns and Villages funding.

Resolved that the verbal report be received.

24/22 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

There were no planning applications to report.

25/22 GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence to discuss.

26/22 OTHER MATTERS

- a) EV Charging Points – this matter was still awaiting consideration. The Acting Parish Clerk provided members with an outline of how EV charging points operate.
- b) Village Hall Gates – it was reported that funds had been secured and the gates would be installed in the near future.
- c) 2022/23 Parish Council Meeting dates as follows:

Monday, 16th May 2022
Monday, 4th July 2022
Monday, 5th September 2022
Monday, 7th November 2022
Monday, 9th January 2023
Monday, 6th March 2023

All Parish Council Meetings start at 6.45 pm and Members of the Public are welcome to attend.

- e) The Queen's Platinum Jubilee – the Chair reported that the Village Hall Association had requested permission to hold a Queen's Platinum Jubilee lunch on Sunday, 5th June, 2022 on the Village Green.

Resolved that:

1. the verbal report be received
2. the Parish Council Meeting dates for 2022/23 municipal year be approved
3. permission be granted for the use of the Village Green by the Village Hall Association on Sunday, 5th June, 2022 subject to all relevant insurance/risk assessment/third party documents be provided to the Parish Council.

27/22 ADDITIONAL ITEMS

The Chair read out a statement to support the condemnation of the invasion of Ukraine. "Middridge Parish Council condemns the unjustified Russian invasion of Ukraine and calls on the UK Government to be generous in allowing any Ukrainian refugees who wish to come to our country, to do so".

It was proposed by Cllr P Dicker and seconded by Cllr E Hayman and

Resolved that

- 1.** the statement be approved and adopted.
- 2.** the statement be forwarded onto the Member of Parliament representing Middridge and uploaded to the website.

28/22 NEXT MEETING

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Monday, 16th May, 2022 at 6.45pm in the Village Hall.

The Meeting closed at 20.35pm