

APPROVED

## Middridge Parish Council

### Minutes of Council Meeting

Village Hall,  
Middridge

Monday  
8<sup>th</sup> January, 2018

Time: 6.45 pm

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

**In attendance:** Cllrs S Durham, P Howell & J Clare (DCC)

**Official:** A D Jordan (Clerk)

#### 1/18 NOTICE OF MEETING

The Notice convening the Meeting was taken as read.

#### 2/18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr P Makinson.

#### 3/18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

#### 4/18 MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

None

#### 5/18 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting of 8<sup>th</sup> November 2017 were accepted, and signed by the Chair as a true record.

#### 6/18 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES

##### **(i) Defibrillator (107/17 (i) refers)**

The Registration Documents have been supplied. It proved impossible to arrange for "Bay Horse" Staff to attend a Training Session, and there are no more available.

Our DCC Councillors offered to fund a Training Session for Parish Councillors and other Middridge Residents, including Pub Staff, from their Small Grant Budgets; this is to be investigated.

**Action:** Clerk

#### 7/18 "ELDON WHINS" DEVELOPMENTS & THE COUNTY PLAN

No further progress on the Persimmon "Eldon Whins" Planning Application. Keepmoat Homes have yet to submit the expected Full Planning Application. The County Plan is progressing slowly.

#### 8/18 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE & GENERAL REPAIRS

##### **(i) Middridge Quarry Safety Fence**

A new Fence with Warning Notices is now in position.

## APPROVED

### **(ii) DCC proposed Street Light Removal**

Cllr S Smith has prepared a Letter to DCC regarding their proposed SLA, together with a number of Car Cam Pictures showing the problem of seeing Pedestrians using Walkers Lane at night. Following consultation with Parish Councillors, this Letter has been sent to DCC; their response is awaited.

**Action:** Cllr S Smith

### **(iii) Parish Council owned Trees**

The large Ash Tree at the entrance to the Play Area has now been reduced by 30%. Some additional Crown Lifting is considered necessary; Oliver's Trees will be requested to do this when they return to work on the Village Green Trees.

**Action:** Clerk

Oliver's Trees have submitted a Planning Application for the proposed work on the Village Green Trees.

### **(iv) Skill Mill**

The Skill Mill have satisfactorily cleared Path 7 alongside the Quarry. They still require Training before they can clear the Footpath near the "Bay Horse" with Weedkiller.

**Action:** Clerk

### **(v) Parish Paths**

The Parish Path Partnership (PPP) have arranged to repair the fallen Stone Stile on Path Path 7. The Potholes on Parish Path 6 Potholes have also been reported to the PPP, and their response is awaited.

**Action:** Clerk

Notices have been posted at the Entrances to all the Parish Paths informing Dog Owners that it may be impossible to maintain the Paths in future unless they behave responsibly.

### **(vi) Noise Complaints**

A Complaint has been submitted to DCC regarding the irregular "Gunfire-like" Noises which are heard from time to time, and cause distress to a Resident's Dog; 4 People in Newton Aycliffe have subsequently lodged similar Complaints. This Noise has been identified as due to a Bird-Scarer at the Eden Grange Fishery, which is used whenever Anglers are not fishing. The use of Bird-Scarers is in practice governed by NFU Guidelines, which state that they should not activate more than 4 times per hour. DCC have supplied Complainants with a Smart-Phone App which records the Level and Repetition Rate of the Noise for evidential purposes, but unfortunately the Middridge Complainant cannot use this; Parish Councillors are to consider who in Middridge might be able to do this.

Surprise was also expressed that there have been no Complaints from the new "Middridge Vale" Estate on the outskirts of Shildon, where the Bird-Scarer Noise must be much louder; the Clerk to Shildon Town Council (Tracey Bellas) is to be contacted about this.

**Action:** Clerk

### **(vii) 2017/18 Maintenance Contracts**

Ian Hayman of Complete Weed Control has provided Quotations for this year's Village Green and Parish Path Maintenance Contracts, which are identical to last years.

**RESOLVED** that these Quotations be accepted.

**Action:** Clerk

APPROVED

**9/18 PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

Nothing to report.

**10/18 CHILDREN'S' PLAY AREA**

The Clerk's Monthly Inspection Report was approved. The outstanding repainting of the Bench and Circular Table/Seat will be organised in the Summer.

**Action:** Clerk

Our Insurers (Zurich) have completed their Annual Inspection, and as usual the provision of Signage was recommended; following discussion it was decided not to proceed with this.

**11/18 ROAD-TRAFFIC**

Nothing to report.

**12/18 "THE PADDOCK"**

Nothing to report.

**13/18 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (NP)**

No progress. A Meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group is to be organised urgently, as the Grant for the next stage of work is due to run out shortly.

**Action:** Mrs A Clarke

**14/18 ACCOUNTS**

Councillors considered a Schedule of Accounts for Payment.

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

<b>Payee</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Sum</b>
The Skill Mill Ltd.*	Parish Path Improvements	£350.00
Zurich Municipal *	Additional Insurance Cover	£165.70
CDALC *	GPDR Training Course	£27.00
A.D. Jordan	Clerk's Oct-Dec Salary	£232.30
HMRC	Clerk's Oct-Dec Tax	£155.20
D. Johnson	Christmas Tree	£240.00
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£1170.20</b>

\* - with Councillors agreement, these Cheques have already be issued, so the formal Approval given is retrospective.

Councillors considered the Council's 2018/19 Precept, in the light of the increased Insurance Cover now required, and the extraordinary Expenditure on Tree Maintenance.

**RESOLVED** that the Parish Council's 2018/19 Precept be increased by 2%.

**Action:** Clerk

**15/18 GAMP & CDALC**

GAMP – nothing particular to report.

CDALC - Cllr W Mellors attended an Executive Committee Meeting, but nothing of relevance to Middridge was discussed.

## APPROVED

The new General Data Protection Regulations (GPDR) come into force in March. NALC are investigating the impact of these new Regulations, and the situation is currently unclear, but it appears likely that the Parish Council will need to appoint a qualified Data Protection Officer. This is likely to be expensive, and the possibility of CDALC organising a Data Protection Officer who could act for a number of Small Councils was discussed; this is to be raised with the CDALC Executive Committee.  
**Action:** Cllr W Mellors

The Parish Council appears to hold little Data covered by these new Regulations, but their impact could probably be reduced by selectively eliminating some Data we do hold e.g. Residents Contact Details; this possibility is to be investigated.  
**Action:** Clerk

### 16/18 GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

None.

### 17/18 OTHER MATTERS

#### (i) Parish Council 2018/19 Meeting Dates

**RESOLVED** that the previously circulated proposed Meeting Dates be approved.  
**Action:** Clerk

#### (ii) Durham Big Spring Clean

Details of this year's Durham Big Spring Clean have been received. It was agreed that Middridge would take part as usual, on the date of our next Regular Litter-pick.  
**Action:** Clerk

### 18/18 ADDITIONAL ITEMS

#### (i) Chair's Chain of Office

This is wearing out, and needs repair; a Quotation will be sought.  
**Action:** Cllr H Howe

#### (ii) Councillors Role

Cllr S Smith has asked for clarification on how a Parish Councillor should handle queries from Residents. Normally these should be raised with the Parish Clerk, who will provide advice, and if necessary raise such matters with the Chair of the Council, who will decide whether to consult other Councillors. Cllr J Clare stressed that Councillors should take care when speaking in public to clarify whether their views are personal, or represent the agreed position of the Parish Council.

The 'Good Councillors Guide' contains advice on these matters; copies will be recirculated to Councillors.

**Action:** Clerk

### 19/18 NEXT MEETING

The next Meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Monday, 5<sup>th</sup> March, 2018, at 6.45pm.

Chair \_\_\_\_\_