

Middridge Parish Council

Minutes of Council Meeting

**Village Hall
Middridge**

**Monday
7th March 2005**

Time: 6.45 p.m.

Present: Councillor W. J. Mellors (Chairman) and
Councillors Mrs A. Clarke, W.J. Clarke, H. Howe & J.Morland

Official: N.Hart (Clerk);

Also in attendance: 3 members of the public

59/04 NOTICE OF MEETING

The notice convening the meeting was taken as read.

60/04 MINUTES

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting held on
10th January 2005 be confirmed as a correct record
and be signed by the Chairman.

61/04 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES

**Development Proposals-Land to the East of Spout Lane,
Shildon (Minute 52/04 refers)**

Reference was made to press coverage within the last few days confirming that the above development had been given outline approval by Sedgfield Borough Council's Development Control Committee. Neither the Parish Clerk, Chairman or any members of the Parish had received any correspondence indicating that the matter was to receive further consideration. (This Parish had previously expressed its objections to the initial proposed development in the late Summer of 2004 and had asked to be kept informed of the developments progress through the various planning stages.)

Members of the public present confirmed that they had infact been invited to the particular Development Control Committee convened to consider the application; and were understandably concerned that a similar invitation had not been extended to the Parish Council.

It was proposed that the Clerk contact the Borough Council to express the utmost concern that this Council did not seem to have been consulted or invited to comment on the latest stage of this application's route through the planning processes; and that confirmation of the Development Control's Committee be confirmed. In addition, confirmation was required as to the categorisation of the land in question; which had previously been suggested as 'brownfield'.

RESOLVED that the Clerk write to Sedgefield Borough Council, as outlined above, expressing this Council's dissatisfaction regarding consultation on the latest stage of planning consideration of the development proposals on land to the East of Spout Lane.

Parish Paths (Minute 52/04 refers)

Members of the Parish Council had since met with the contractor responsible for works to the Parish Paths, along with Durham County Council's Parish Paths Officer, and confirmed that the works had been carried out to a satisfactory standard.

An invoice for the works carried out during this financial year had also now been submitted by the contractor (see accounts for payment), along with an estimate for works to be carried out in 2005/6. It was noted that the agreed schedule of works to the paths had been drawn up some 18 months ago.

Bus Shelter/Litter bins (Minute No. 52/04 refers)

The Clerk confirmed that he had met with Peter Creamer from the Wolverhampton & Dudley brewery and he had indicated a willingness, on behalf of his brewery, to meet the cost of purchasing a suitable litter bin to be provided on the Village Green outside the Bay Horse.

RESOLVED That the Clerk contact Sedgefield Borough Council to obtain a quote for the cost of purchasing an appropriate litter bin; and that this information be forwarded to Mr Creamer for his continuing consideration.

Traffic Survey (Minute 52/04 refers)

Members agreed that they would meet in the near future to discuss the case for imposing a speed restriction of 30mph on the stretch of C35 to Bluebell Corner; and would thereafter request that the Clerk contact the County Council Highway's Authority with such a submission.

Play Area off The Meadowings (Min. 52/04)

Members of the Parish Council had met with a representative of Zurich Municipal Insurance to inspect the condition of the play equipment at the above site, in the presence of an engineer from Great Aycliffe Town Council (GATC)

The inspection revealed works required to two of the big swings (replacement of 'bushes') and to one of the smaller swings that had been found to have a bolt seized. GATC revealed that they would carry out the necessary works and would recharge the Parish Council should they need to order in the required parts.

The Pussy Willow tree located near the Play Area was also found to be in need of 'chopping back'.

Reference was also made to the amount of dog dirt found in the area; despite there being a number of dog litter bins located within the Parish. It was suggested that the public's attention be drawn to the resultant health problems that this waste could cause in the next Residents Newsletter and, at the same time, the Dog Warden at Sedgefield Borough Council be advised of the problem and be requested to monitor the situation with a view to either more litter bins being provided, or more emptying of the existing bins being carried out.

RESOLVED that the proposed action identified above be approved.

Maintenance of Trees on Village Green (Minute 52/04 refers)

GATC had been provided with a copy of the agreed maintenance schedule and map identifying the trees in question and had indicated that they would carry out the necessary maintenance forthwith.

62/04 Accounts for Payment

Members considered a schedule of Accounts for Payment.

RESOLVED that the following accounts be approved for payment:-

Marc Platts	Parish Paths Partnership	£424.00
N.Hart	Salary	£141.67
N.Hart	Postage	£2.24
W.Mellors	Village Tubs-Reimbursement	£60.00
C.E.Walker	Grounds Maintenance	£110.45

63/04 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE AND GENERAL REPAIRS

Reference was made to the problem identified at the last meeting regarding the encroachment of vehicles on Northside, causing damage to the Village Green. A Recycling vehicle from Sedgefield Borough Council had been just one of the vehicles observed as having encroached on to the Green causing damage to the grass. The location of the existing salt bin also exacerbated this problem as the vehicles sought to drive across the Green to avoid making contact with the bin.

It was proposed that the Clerk write to Sedgefield Borough Council advising them of the damage caused by vehicles, including their own, and that they be requested to 'make good' the damage caused and to consider re-locating the salt bin to make the passage of vehicles easier. It was also suggested that the next Residents Newsletter include mention of this particular problem in an effort to prevent other vehicles causing similar damage. It was noted that the Parish Council could not seek to reduce the size of the area of open space without first identifying additional provision it could make elsewhere in the Village. Members indicated that this could be investigated in the future.

The Chairman indicated that he had delivered the letters of appreciation and donations of £10 to each of the people responsible for maintaining the flower tubs on the Village Green. Mrs McGeekin had contacted the Council to express her gratitude for the donation and letter of appreciation.

Reference was also made to the following problems of litter/rubbish identified in the Village and adjacent area:-

- Litter caught up in the tress on the Village Green;
- ‘dumping’ of waste in the area between the Shildon & Middridge crossroads and Middridge Drift.
- rats identified in gardens within the Village

RESOLVED that:-

- 1.The Clerk write to Sedgefield Borough Council advising them of the damage caused by vehicles, including their own, to the Village Green and that they be requested to 'make good' the damage caused and to consider re-locating the salt bin to make the passage of vehicles easier.
2. The Clerk contact the County Council Highways Authority to request that the problem of litter caught up in the trees on the Village Green be removed.
- 3.The Clerk of Eldon Parish Council be advised of the problem regarding the dumping of waste in the area of the Shildon & Middridge crossroads with a view to action being taken to prevent any further instances occurring and for the waste to be removed.

4. The Pest Control Officer at Sedgefield Borough Council be advised of the problem regarding the presence of rats in the gardens of properties within the Village; and mention of this be also made in the Residents Newsletter.

64/04 PARISH PATHS-APPLICATION FOR GRANT 2005/2006

Consideration was given to submission of an application for grant for works to the Parish's Public Rights of Way for 2005/2006; and the appointment of a suitable contractor to carry out the works.

An estimate had been received for the works from the contractor responsible for works during 2004/2005.

It was suggested that members inspect the footpaths to determine which works would be required to be carried out and that invitations to tender for the contract be then extended to interested parties. It was requested that the Parish Clerk attempt to identify potential interested contractors in consultation with the County Council's Parish Paths Officer.

RESOLVED that:-

1. Members inspect the footpaths to determine which works would be required to be carried out to maintain the public footpaths during 2005/6 and that invitations to tender for the contract be then extended to interested parties.

2 The Parish Clerk attempt to identify potential interested contractors in consultation with the County Council's Parish Paths Officer.

65/04 GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

The Council considered the following correspondence:-

-Invitation to attend Sedgefield Borough Council Civic Ball-1st April 2005

-Sedgefield Borough Council-Statement of Licensing Policy

-Sedgefield & District Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

-Member Standards-Update/Training Forum-8th April 2005-05-01

-Standards Board of England-A Code for the Future

RESOLVED that:-

1.The Chairman (and partner) be authorised to attend the Civic Ball and that the cost of the tickets be funded by the Parish Council.

2.The Statement of Licensing Policy be noted.

3. Cllr Ann Clark seek to identify who is responsible for the proposed reduction in funding of the CAB with a view to the Parish then writing to the Association of Parish Councils outlining its support for measures that would secure its continued funding.

4. The Members Standard training event be noted.

5. The consultation document received from the Standards Board be circulated to all members of the Parish Council and they be asked to return their replies in confidence by the 17th June 2005.

66/04 ADDITIONAL ITEMS

Members referred to the following issues requiring consideration:-

-the next meeting of the Council would be preceded by the Annual Meeting of the Council on the 9th May 2005;

-it was suggested that consideration be given to events to commemorate the end of the current Municipal Year of the reign of Cllr Mellors as Chairman; and that a meal and get together be organised to take place within the Bay Horse;

-it had been noted that parts of the C35 road to Bluebell Corner had been found to have been flooded in certain parts as a result of water draining from the adjacent fields. It was suggested that this be reported to the County Council's Highways Action Line.

-members had observed that representatives from Sedgefield Borough Council had removed certain trees on Eden Grove, behind the Bay Horse as they had considered them to be dangerous. No formal communication had however been received from the Borough Council to this effect; although the trees themselves (unlike those on the Village Green) belonged to the Borough Council. Following the removal of the trees, some residents had taken to parking their vehicles on the area, causing congestion problems. It was proposed that the Clerk write to the responsible officer at Sedgefield Borough Council to request that in future, this Council be advised of any works to be carried out to these particular trees and that the Borough Council review their planting policy with a view to re-planting taking place in this particular area.

RESOLVED that the Clerk write to the responsible officer at Sedgefield Borough Council to request that in future, this Council be advised of any works to be carried out to these particular trees and that the Borough Council review their planting policy with a view to re-planting taking place in this particular area.

67/04 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 13 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972

68/04 BROADLEY & COULSON-ERECTION OF FOR SALE SIGN-VILLAGE GREEN

Consideration was given to correspondence received in connection with the unauthorised erection of a For Sale sign on land owned by the Parish Council.

RESOLVED that no further action be taken with regard to the above situation.

69/04 NEXT MEETING

Monday 9th May 2005 at 6.45pm.