

APPROVED

Middridge Parish Council

Minutes of Council Meeting

Village Hall,
Middridge

Monday
4th September, 2017

Time: 6.45 pm

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

In attendance: Cllrs P Howell & J Clare (DCC)

Official: A D Jordan (Clerk)

83/17 NOTICE OF MEETING

The Notice convening the Meeting was taken as read.

84/17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr H Howe (Chair).

85/17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

86/17 MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

None

87/17 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting of 3rd July 2017 were accepted, and signed by the Acting Chair as a true record.

88/17 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES

(i) Defibrillator (67/17 (i) refers)

The Registration Documents for the Defibrillator, and Arrangements for the proposed Middridge Training Session, are still awaited.

89/17 "ELDON WHINS" DEVELOPMENT & THE COUNTY PLAN

The Parish Council's Letter of Objection to the Persimmon Planning Application was submitted. The Parish Council will be notified when the Planning Committee are to hear this Application, and will be able to attend this Meeting to put their Objections.

Cllr J Clare commented that following a discussion with the DCC Case Officer, it was his impression that the Planning Department are likely to recommend Approval.

90/17 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE & GENERAL REPAIRS

(i) Middridge Quarry Safety Fence

The state of the Safety Fence where Parish Path 7 runs alongside the edge of the Middridge Quarry was reported to DCC as a Health & Safety issue. In response the Quarry Owners (Wards) have apparently said that they will take action, although details of what they propose are not known at present, and that they also:-

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- (a) Are considering erecting a Fence to prevent access to the Floor of the Quarry; the Parish Council would support this.
- (b) Would like to fill in part of the Quarry. It was pointed out that since the Quarry is an area of Special Scientific Interest this would not be permitted, and in any case the Parish Council are opposed.

It was agreed that the Parish Council would await developments, but their interest in this matter should be made clear to the DCC Officer concerned (Peter Crinion).

Action: Clerk

(ii) DCC proposed Street Light Removal

A response from Yvonne Edwards is still awaited.

(iii) Trees

Cllr S Smith said that she and her husband had removed the branch which recently fell from a Tree near the North Side Bus Shelter. She also expressed her concern regarding the state of some of the other branches on the Parish Council's Trees, and suggested that the Council should consider carrying out a Risk Assessment. Following discussion it was agreed that a DCC Officer should be consulted to seek his opinion.

Action: Clerk

(iv) Skill Mill

This new DCC Project offers Youth Offenders an opportunity to help improve the Environment in the County. Following discussion it was agreed that the Parish Council should seek help to:-

- (a) Improve the state of Parish Path 7 (the Tramway). It was noted that this would require the approval of the DCC Parish Path Partnership.
- (b) Clear the grass which has grown over the Footpaths crossing the Village Green.

Action: Clerk

(v) Parish Paths

Cllr S Smith mentioned that there were a number of substantial Potholes in Parish Path 6 (which runs alongside the Railway between the bottom of Walkers Lane and Middridge Quarry) which become filled with water after rain, and make using the Path difficult. It was agreed to consult the Parish Path Partnership about this.

Action: Clerk

91/17 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Nothing to report.

92/17 CHILDREN'S' PLAY AREA

Ian Hayman has cleared the Moss from the Swing Bases.

The Clerk's Monthly Inspection report was approved.

Cllr H Alexander kindly agreed to repaint the small area of damage on the Goalpost. The Clerk is investigating the possibility of fitting some form of Bird Repelling device to the Swings to prevent fouling of the Seats.

93/17 ROAD-TRAFFIC

The two 30 mph Speed Limit Signs which were disfigured by Racist Graffiti will be replaced by the end of October.

Cllrs S Smith and P Makinson mentioned that the width of the Pavement on the corner of the Main Road near the Village Hall was restricted by Bollards, and as a

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result People with Prams and Pushchairs had to step into the Road, which is clearly dangerous. It was agreed to investigate whether the Pavement could be widened by removing the grass which has encroached onto it and if necessary to request the DCC Highways Department to consider what should be done.

Action: Clerk

94/17 “THE PADDOCK”

An On-Site Meeting has been arranged so that those concerned can discuss Cllr J Clare’s Proposal to make some immediate improvements to ‘the Paddock’. Cllr J Clare again stressed that no-one was committed to anything at this stage.

95/17 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (NP)

The Parish Council’s Grant Application for a second tranche of Consultancy Support has been approved. A Meeting of the NP Working Group to discuss arrangements for the proposed new Community Engagement Exercise is being organised.

Action: Clerk

Cllr J Clare stressed the importance of having an NP when it comes to protecting Areas of Separation between Developments. Great Aycliffe Town Council have recently been able to successfully oppose an unwanted Development due to these provisions in their recently approved NP.

96/17 ACCOUNTS

RESOLVED that the Parish Council approves and accepts their 2016/17 Accounts as approved by the External Auditor.

Councillors considered a Schedule of Accounts for Payment.

RESOLVED that the following Accounts be approved for payment:-

Payee	Purpose	Sum
Hayfields Contracting Ltd.	Play Area Cleaning	£180.00
BDO LLP	External Auditor Fee	£120.00
	TOTAL	£300.00

97/17 GAMP & CDALC

GAMP activities have now resumed following “Purdah”. Project Grant Applications which amount to three times the available Budget are currently being considered.

Cllr W Mellors stated that since his appointment as the Representative of the GAMP Local Councils Forum on the CDALC Executive Committee, he has not been invited to attend any Executive Committee Meetings; this is to be investigated.

Action: Clerk

98/17 GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

A Letter was received from the Middridge Village Association thanking the Parish Council for their Donation of a £40 Raffle Prize.

99/17 OTHER MATTERS

(i) Remembrance Sunday Arrangements

The arrangements for this year’s Remembrance Sunday (12th November) were discussed. The Clerk will liaise with Tracey Bellas (Shildon Town Council Clerk)

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regarding provision of a Bugler, and the usual Wreathes and Crosses (including those for the Middridge Village Association).

RESOLVED that the Parish Council approves the same expenditure as last year (£30) towards the costs of the Remembrance Sunday Arrangements.

Action: Clerk

100/17

ADDITIONAL ITEMS

(i) Stone Planter

Cllr Sue Smith mentioned that someone would like to place an Engraved Stone Planter next to the new Bench on the Triangle of Village Green in front of the Village Hall. Concern was expressed whether granting such a request could lead to other People wishing to do the same, whether a Stone Planter was appropriate as all the other Tubs on the Village Green were wooden, and who would maintain the Planter. It was agreed to defer this matter for consideration at a future Parish Council Meeting, when, and if, a firmer Proposal is received.

101/17

NEXT MEETING

The next Meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Monday, 6th November, 2017, at 6.45pm.

Chair _____