

SIGNED MINUTES

Middridge Parish Council

Minutes of Council Meeting

**Village Hall,
Middridge**

**Monday
4th July 2011**

Time:6.45pm

Present: Councillors H Howe (Chairman); A Clarke, WJ Clarke, P Makinson.

Official: CA Stenger (Clerk)

22/11 NOTICE OF MEETING

The notice convening the meeting was taken as read.

23/11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies received from Cllr W Mellors.

24/11 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 May 2011 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record

25/11 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES

Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2011 (minute 13/11 refers)

The Annual Audit paperwork had been completed and sent to BDO for external audit. Correspondence had been received requesting further information be provided, including detailed reasons why income/expenses were increased from last financial year, and a bank statement or reconciliation. The VAT refund application had been completed and submitted, and confirmation received that the amount of £723.56 had been refunded.

RESOLVED that the clerk compile the necessary information for the audit and return to BDO by 11th July as required.

Grounds Maintenance & General Repairs

i) Maintenance of the Millennium Hedge (minute 14/11 ii refers)

Cllr A Clarke contacted Ian Grey, who suggested contacting the Countryside Service. They cover areas of Durham County Council only, but will ask volunteer members if they would be willing to undertake maintenance of the Millennium Hedge – members of the Council also offered their help.

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- ii) Parish Paths Partnership (minute 14/11 iv refers)

An email had been received confirming that the fallen tree had been removed

26/11 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Members considered a schedule of Accounts for Payment.

RESOLVED that the following accounts be approved for payment:-

C Stenger	Salary	£191.65
SE Landscaping	Grasscutting - May	£188.00
SE Landscaping	Grasscutting – June	£188.00
C Gray	Internal Audit	£65.00
Cllr A Clarke	Reimbursement for N Hart leaving gift	£50.00
Middridge Village Association	Donation – fete raffle	£40.00
Cllr P Makinson	Reimbursement for tubs & compost	51.70
National Ass of Councillors	Membership fees	£78.00

27/11 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE & GENERAL REPAIRS

- i) A new tub had been purchased and sited by Cllr Makinson.
- ii) It was noted that the trees on the village green need remedial work as the low hanging branches are becoming a hazard, impeding the grass cutting and posing health and safety risks to villagers.
- iii) The grass cutting had been monitored over the preceding months and the quality was discussed. Members were satisfied with the standard, especially the care and attention taken during the cut preceding the village fete.

RESOLVED ii) that the clerk contact the relevant department to enquire about permission to have the trees modestly crown lifted, and iii) that the quality continue to be monitored.

28/11 PROPOSED DISPOSAL OF ALLOTMENTS BY DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL, MIDDRIDGE

There had been no response to the emails sent to Joanne Maclean. It was suggested that Cllr Dorothy Bowman be contacted and for Joanne Maclean to be contacted by telephone.

RESOLVED that Cllr A Clarke contact Cllr Bowman and that the clerk attempt to contact Joanne Maclean by telephone.

(Cllr Makinson declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in respect of the above item as a result of being a current allotment holder.)

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29/11 **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

The Clerk advised that an application had been presented, requesting the removal of 2 conditions of previous planning approval for Middridge Meadows. The application was considered.

RESOLVED that the clerk contact David Gibson to request further details of the application, in particular with regards to future development plans for the site, before the Council submits a response.

30/11 **CHILDREN'S' PLAY AREA**

Consideration was given to the Clerk's monthly inspection report regarding the condition of the play area and equipment. There were no issues with the play equipment but it was noted that the inner fence around the play area, while still secure as there is an outer fence also, is not as stable as it could be and is leaning inward.

The football net had been inspected by Cllr Clarke and Cllr Howe and deemed satisfactory, and not a substantial risk to health and safety.

The Clerk had contacted Zurich regarding the overdue inspection of the play equipment and had been informed that the inspection had taken place in November 2010 – a further copy of the report would be provided as a copy had not been received.

RESOLVED that the report be noted and that the condition of the fence be monitored by the Clerk and any substantial deterioration reported.

31/11 **C35 NEWTON AYCLIFFE TO SHILDON ROAD-TRAFFIC CALMING**

Mr Straugheir had been contacted with regard to a meeting and had agreed; however the meeting was deferred until after the PACT meeting as Inspector Andy Neill had offered to attend in order to address concerns and discuss measures that could be taken regarding speeding.

The PACT meeting was well attended and the main item of discussion was the measures available to slow speed. The outcome was that the police are to initiate a Community Speed Watch and requested volunteers of all ages from the village to stand with officers while this was undertaken. Once speed statistics were available, further measures could be discussed and considered.

RESOLVED that the Clerk contact Mr Straugheir to defer meeting until further notice.

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32/11 G.A.T.C./MIDDRIDGE AREA ACTION PARTNERSHIP FEEDBACK

Cllr A Clarke advised of a Forum to be held Tuesday 12 July, from 2pm until 8pm at Newton Aycliffe Leisure Centre.

The date of the next Board meeting is Tuesday 19th July at 6pm in Aycliffe Village Community Hall.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

33/11 DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL PLAN / FUTURE OF LOCAL PUBLIC AUDIT

The Council's response to the Durham County Council Plan, opposing the housing development at Eldon Whins, had been completed and was ready to be submitted, including residents completed questionnaires. Cllr A Clarke advised that 1000 houses had already been allocated for Newton Aycliffe, including 347 for Eldon Whins.

The Future of Local Public Audit response was also complete.

RESOLVED that the clerk submit both responses.

34/11 CLERK'S SALARY – NEW REQUIREMENTS

The Clerk reported that it is now a requirement for all Parish Councils to be registered as employers, and for all Parish Clerks to be paid through PAYE. Cllr Howe advised of details obtained from his accountant, David Scott, of a price for running a payroll. However it may be possible for the Clerk to complete the required procedure and run a basic payroll system through HMRC online tools. Cllr Howe also advised of workshops run by HMRC/Inland Revenue.

RESOLVED that the Clerk look into matters further and contact NALC and HMRC for advice.

35/11 GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

The Council considered the email log, detailing all emails received by the Clerk, and the following correspondence:

County of Durham School Benevolent Fund – donation request.

RESOLVED that the correspondence be noted.

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36/11 DATES FOR MEETINGS

The following dates for meetings were already agreed:

5th September 2011
7 November 2011
9 January 2012
5 March 2012

RESOLVED that the Clerk contact Mrs L Beadle to check that she is aware of the above dates for booking of the hall.

37/11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Cllr P Makinson requested that copies of previous minutes to emailed to him for inclusion on the Middridge Village website.

38/11 NEXT MEETING

Monday, 5th September 2011 at 6.45pm

Chairman _____