

APPROVED

Middridge Parish Council

Minutes of Council Meeting

**Village Hall,
Middridge**

**Monday
1st July 2019**

Time: 6.45 pm

Present: Cllrs H Howe (Chair), W Mellors, H Alexander & P Makinson

In Attendance: Cllr J Clare & S Durham (DCC)

Official: A Jordan (Clerk)

63/19 NOTICE OF MEETING

The Notice convening the Meeting was taken as read.

64/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr S Smith and Cllr P Howell (DCC)

65/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

All Councillors have been sent a new Declaration of Interests Form, together with how they can see their current Declaration via the Village Website. Cllrs S Smith and H Alexander have both indicated that they will need to update their Declaration of Interests, and new completed Forms are awaited.

66/19 MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

None

67/19 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting of 13th May 2019 were accepted, and signed by the Chair as a true record.

68/19 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

None

69/19 POLICING

No issues raised.

70/19 "ELDON WHINS" DEVELOPMENTS & THE COUNTY PLAN

The DCC Highways Department has been contacted, and concern expressed that the Parish Council was not being informed, or consulted, about Road Closures that would

APPROVED

severely affect Middridge (and local Businesses). Cllr J Clare commented that County Councillors were not necessarily well informed of Roadworks that affected their Wards, and kindly agreed to raise this issue with the DCC Highways Department.

Action: Cllr J Clare

However, possibly as a result of the above, the Parish Council have just been officially notified of a C35 Road Closure starting on 15th July, for one week. Cllr J Clare commented that his idea of a temporary road bypassing the Drainage Works, and thus avoiding the necessity of this Road Closure, had apparently proved impractical.

An official complaint has been lodged with the DCC Planning Enforcement Team regarding the amount of mud on Greenfield Way; receipt has been acknowledged. Cllr J Clare advised that we would need to repeat these complaints (whenever appropriate) before any action was likely.

Action: Clerk

An official complaint was also lodged with the DCC Highways Department regarding the lack of sufficient advance warning of possible queues from the Traffic Lights; this issue was satisfactorily addressed. Unfortunately this problem has reoccurred, resulting in at least one near Accident, and despite another complaint, nothing has yet been done; this is to be chased.

Action: Clerk

Cllr W Mellors suggested that Keepmoat Homes should be contacted, with a view to having a Site Contact with whom any Issues regarding their Development could be raised; this was agreed.

Action: Clerk

The Chair suggested that the Parish Council should prepare a "Welcome to Middridge" Flyer for potential new "Elder Gardens" Residents (Keepmoat Homes have previously indicated they would be prepared to facilitate this); this was agreed.

Action: Clerk

The Draft County Durham Plan (CDP) has been approved by DCC, and submitted to the Secretary of State for Government Inspection. Cllr W Mellors and the Clerk are investigating to see if there have been any changes in the submission version of the CDP which would affect Middridge. Some difficulty has been experienced in locating this version of the CDP on the DCC Website, but Cllr J Clare suggested how this could be found.

71/19 "THE PADDOCK" WILD-FLOWER GRASSLAND

The Section 106 Money from the Persimmon "Elder Gardens" Development is now available to fund this Proposal. There have been a number of conflicting views expressed about this Proposal, and the Chair suggested that a Working Group should be established, which any interested Resident could join, to ensure whatever is done reflects Resident's wishes; this was agreed. A Notice is to be prepared to publicise the Working Group.

Action: Clerk

72/19 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE & GENERAL REPAIRS

(a) Street Light Removal

Nothing to report.

APPROVED

(b) Walkers Lane Road & Parking

Nothing to report.

(c) Parish Paths

Peter Crinnion of the PPP is investigating who owns the recently discovered Metal Kissing Gate on Path 2.

Ian Hayman has submitted his Invoice for the First Cut of the Parish Paths.

(d) Tree Maintenance

The Clerk has submitted the final paperwork for this GAMP Neighbourhood Budget funded Project, which is now complete.

(e) Dog Litter

Still no response from DCC to the proposal to relocate a Dig Litter Bin to Northside Close. Cllr J Clare kindly agreed to chase this.

Action: Cllr J Clare

(f) Village Green Maintenance

Millennium Hedge – Jonathan Pounder has been contacted to provide a Quotation for the necessary maintenance, but to date no reply has been received. Cllr J Clare suggested we contact Tammy Morris-Hale of the DCC Ecology Department, who may be able to suggest alternative people able to undertake this work.

Action: Clerk

73/19 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

None

74/19 CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA

The Clerk's Monthly Inspection Report was approved.

No action to date on the cleaning the rubberised surfaces under the Swings.

Action: Clerk

75/19 ROAD-TRAFFIC

Nothing to report.

76/19 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (NP)

The Clerk has agreed to try and write a Draft NP, based on the format of the Great Aycliffe NP, to act as a stimulant for Working Group discussion and comment; this is proving easier than expected.

Action: Clerk

An Application for the remaining Government Grant Funds was submitted, which has just been approved, subject only to our accepting the usual Terms & Conditions.

Action: Clerk

77/19 ACCOUNTS

APPROVED

The External Auditors have confirmed that the Parish Council's 2018/19 Accounts will not require an External Audit. The Public Inspection Period will end on 19th July, after which it will be possible to reclaim the VAT paid last Financial Year.

Action: Clerk

RESOLVED that the following Accounts be approved for payment:-

Payee	Purpose	Amount
Citizens Advice County Durham *	Donation	£50.00
National Association of Councillors	Annual Fee	£78.00
A. D. Jordan	Chair's Dinner Expenses	£260.45
Hayfields Contracting Ltd	Parish Paths First Cut	£504.00
	TOTAL	£892.45

* Cheque already issued, so formal authority granted is retrospective.

78/19 GAMP & CDALC

GAMP – The time period for new Area Budget Project Applications is now over, and as usual all three Project Priorities are oversubscribed. Proposals have been reviewed by the Project Task Groups, and now go to a Ranking Panel, which basically decides which Proposals should be supported.

The Parish Council have submitted a "Community Speed Watch" Project Application, under the Community Safety Priority, which would provide for new "Speed Puppets" in the Village, together with a number of Presentations to local Schools, and the Public, plus a Press Campaign, on the theme of Speed Awareness. Katy Milne, the Creative Director for Engagement and Greenfield Arts, did most of the work on this Proposal, and the Chair expressed his thanks for her contribution.

This Proposal was submitted in the name of the Chair, but it has been agreed that in future the Clerk will take responsibility for its progress. The Proposal has been vetted by the GAMP Community Safety Task Group, and a number of queries raised; the Clerk is currently coordinating work to provide suitable responses.

Action: Clerk

Should this Application prove successful, the Chair suggested that a Working Group should be established, which any interested Resident could join, to ensure whatever is done reflects Resident's wishes; this was agreed. However, should this Application prove unsuccessful, there is no reason why it could not be resubmitted next year. GAMP offer free advice on why a Proposal has proved unsuccessful, and what could be done to improve it, and if necessary we would avail ourselves of this facility.

Cllr J Clare suggested that we contact Adrian White of the DCC Highways Department regarding Traffic Census data for Middridge.

CDALC – Great Aycliffe Town Council (GATC) have contacted the Parish Council regarding a proposed Meeting of the GAMP area Local Councils Forum. It has been agreed that the Chair, Cllr W Mellors and the Clerk will attend on behalf of the Parish Council; the date and time of this Meeting have yet to be agreed.

Action: Clerk

APPROVED

79/19 GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

A letter of thanks for our donation was received from Citizens Advice County Durham.

80/19 OTHER MATTERS

(a) Village Green Tubs

Following a discussion by Email, it was unanimously agreed that the gratuity paid to the volunteers who maintain the Village Green Tubs should be increased to £12 per Tub. The necessary Cheque will be raised, and the monies distributed.

Action: Clerk & Cllr H Alexander

One of the Wooden Tubs needs to be replaced, as all the Metal Hoops which hold it together have rusted away. Cllr W Mellors suggested that a “plaque” of some description attached to the Tubs would be a good idea; this was agreed in principle. The Costs of both these options are to be investigated.

Action: Clerk

(b) Play Area “Smokeless Zone”

DCC are promoting the idea of Play Areas being designated as “Smokeless Zones”. The Parish Council agreed that in principle they would support designating the Middridge Play Area as a “Smokeless Zone”, but wondered exactly what the “Smokefree voluntary code” commits them to?

The Clerk suggested that a suitable Noticeboard to display both the “Smoke Free Zone” Notice provided, and also the Notice regarding the Age Limits of the Play Area Equipment, which our Insurers suggest every year ought to be displayed, would be a good idea.

It was agreed that these matters should be investigated.

Action: Clerk

81/19 ADDITIONAL ITEMS

The Chair again raised the issue of Cllr H Alexander, who is now frequently unable to attend Parish Council Meetings due to her work commitments, although she continues to be involved with Parish Council business by email. It was agreed that to avoid this becoming an issue in future, Cllr H Alexander should formally write to the Clerk requesting a Dispensation, which it was previously agreed the Parish Council would grant.

Action: Cllr H Alexander & Clerk

82/19 NEXT MEETING

The next Meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Monday, 2nd September 2019, at

6

.

4

5

p

m

.

T

h

e

C

h