

Middridge Parish Council

**Village Hall,
Middridge**

Minutes of Council Meeting

Monday

1st September 2008

Time:6.45pm

Present: Councillors Mellors (Chairman); Mrs A.Clarke, W.J. Clarke, H.Howe and P.Makinson.

Official: N.Hart (Clerk);

30/08 NOTICE OF MEETING

The notice convening the meeting was taken as read.

31/08 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7th July 2008 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

32/08 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES

i) Police Ward Surgeries

It was noted that Police Ward surgeries would commence immediately prior to the next meeting of the Parish Council.

ii) Civic Chains (Minute 21/08 refers)

The Clerk advised of the likely costs involved in submitting the Civic Chains to a jewellers for the purpose of obtaining an accurate valuation. It was suggested that the Clerk search archive files with a view to locating the original invoice for the Chains; which may provide an indication of approximate value.

iii) Seat Adjacent Bus Shelter (Minute 22/08 refers)

It was noted that the assessment of necessary repairs to the above seat was on-going. Councillor Howe suggested that he obtain a photograph of the seat/planter observed in Stanley, and produce it for the next meeting in order that consideration can be given to a similar seat being obtained for Middridge.

(iv) Land at Eldon Whins-Planning Status of Land (Minute 25/08 refers)

Members queried the official planning status of the above land, following Sedgefield Borough Council's decision to refuse planning approval for the land as housing development; which was also opposed by this Parish Council. It was requested that the Clerk write to Sedgefield Borough Council to enquire about the process, and request officially, that the land be removed from any planning policy as housing land.

(v) Proposed Development of Caravan Club, Middridge Meadows (Minute 25/08 refers)

The Clerk advised that the Caravan Club had granted approval for the establishment of the above site as an official Caravan Club site; and provided further detail of the criteria necessary for approval.

Members requested further confirmation that the site had adequate drainage facilities and waste disposal on site.

(vi) DCC School Admissions Policy (Minute 28/08 refers)

The Clerk advised that a request had been submitted to the DCC School Admissions Section for an appropriate officer to attend a future meeting with members of the Parish Council to discuss concerns regarding recent decisions to refuse two children from Middridge admission to nearby Byerley Park Primary School. It was noted that a new Operations Manager-Admissions had taken up post; and would contact the Clerk to discuss a future meeting opportunity.

33/08 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Members considered a schedule of Accounts for Payment.

RESOLVED that the following accounts be approved for payment:-

CE Walker	Grasscutting-July	£258.50
N.Hart	Salary	£199.99
N.Hart	Postage	£1.80

34/08 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE & GENERAL REPAIRS

- i) Parish Paths Partnership-Proposed Further Work to Footpath No.2 at 6 Houses, Middridge

An estimate had been received from the Council's contractor regarding the necessary works and cost to undertake essential works to remove soil, sticks and stone from the footpath.

It was noted that the Parks & Countryside Officer was currently investigating land ownership issues in the area and had indicated that there may be Parish Paths Partnership grant available to undertake the works.

RESOLVED that an application for Parish Paths grant approval for undertaking the above works, be submitted to Durham County Council.

35/08

CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA

Consideration was given to the Clerk's monthly inspection report regarding the condition of the play area and equipment.

It was noted that the cost of replacing the larger swing seats was £32.50 each, as advised by Playdale Ltd.

The findings from Sedgefield Borough Council's monitoring of any signs of anti-social behaviour in the area, were noted. No further action was considered necessary at this stage.

The Clerk advised of the outcome of the inspection by Hamsterley Tree Surgeons of the damage caused to the large Ash tree adjacent to the play area; and the various short, medium and long term maintenance options for the tree. It was proposed that as the Borough Council had recently cut down and removed a tree on the perimeter of the play area following damage caused by one of their vehicles, they should be requested to consider either proving a replacement tree, or alternatively, meeting the costs of the short term maintenance cost for the Ash tree. In the event that SBC were unable to contribute to the latter course of action, it was proposed that the essential short term maintenance work to the tree be carried out by Hamsterley Tree Surgeons.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The report be noted.
2. Two replacement junior swing seats be obtained from Playdale Ltd and be put in place in early Spring.
3. Sedgefield Borough Council be requested to consider either proving a replacement tree, or alternatively,

meeting the costs of the short term maintenance cost for the Ash tree.

4. In the event that SBC were unable to contribute to the cost of maintenance of the Ash tree, the essential short term maintenance work to the tree be carried out by Hamsterley Tree Surgeons.

36/08 GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

The following correspondence was noted:-

- (i) Boundary Committee for England-Consultation re Size of New Unitary Authority for County Durham
- (ii) DCLG-North East of England Plan
- (iii) SBC-Transfer of Ownership & Management of Council Housing Stock

RESOLVED that the document be noted and Councillor Mellors be authorised to review the content of the North East of England Plan insofar as it affects Middridge and submit any comments as necessary and report back to the next meeting.

37/08 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- (i) Construction of New Roundabout and Access Road, Middridge Road/Greenfield Way, Newton Aycliffe

Consideration was given to endorsement of the proposed objection to the above planning application; which followed previous refusal by Sedgefield Borough Council for the related housing development application.

RESOLVED that the objection of this Parish Council to the above development be confirmed and Sedgefield Borough Council be advised accordingly.

38/08 ARRANGEMENTS FOR REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

Consideration was given to arrangements for Remembrance Sunday. It was proposed that two wreaths be purchased (one on behalf of the Residents Association) at an approximate cost of £25. It was noted that the War Memorial itself required cleaning prior to the event itself; and it was proposed that Councillors Makinson and Mellors carry out the necessary works.

RESOLVED that the proposed arrangements for Remembrance Sunday be confirmed.

39/08 CHRISTMAS LIGHTING

Consideration was given to correspondence received from Durham County Council regards the attachment of Christmas lights to street lighting columns.

Councillor Clarke advised that the Parish Council's lights had their own transformer box; and therefore did not require any attachment to any street lighting column.

RESOLVED that Durham County Council be advised of the above situation.

40/08 ADDITIONAL ITEMS

(i) Vice Chairman-Training

It was noted that it would be appropriate for the current Vice Chairman to 'shadow' the duties of the existing Chair in the time remaining during the current Municipal Year, and take up any training opportunities that are presented; as preparation for his expected term of office as Chairman for 2009/10.

(ii) Overgrown Trees-Footpath adjacent Allotments/Land at 35-37 Southside

Reference was made to overgrown trees in the above locations; and it was requested that the matter be brought to the attention of Durham County Council.

(iii) C35 Road-Traffic Safety Concerns

Reference was made to the recent traffic surveys undertaken on the above stretch of road; and the possible traffic calming devices that could assist in reducing traffic speed in this area. It was requested that the Clerk contact Durham County Council once again re this issue to ask what further action they intend to take; or advise as being appropriate, following assessment of the results of the above surveys.

41/08 NEXT MEETING

Monday, 3rd November 2008 at 6.45pm

Chairman _____

