

# Midridge Parish Council

## Minutes of Council Meeting

Village Hall,  
Midridge

Monday  
9 January 2012

Time: 6.45pm

**Present:** Councillors H Howe (Chairman); A Clarke, WJ Clarke, W Mellors

**Official:** CA Stenger (Clerk)

### 73/11 NOTICE OF MEETING

The notice convening the meeting was taken as read.

### 74/11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies received from Cllr P Makinson.

### 75/11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest to note.

### 76/11 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7 November 2011 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### 77/11 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES

i) Maintenance of the Millennium Hedge (min 60/11 i) refers)

The clearing of undergrowth was undertaken by members of the Council, with help from volunteers. Thanks were extended to all who helped.

ii) Parish Paths Partnership (min 60/11 ii) refers)

A suitable route and map for the circular walk had been identified and all information was now ready to be passed on to Elaine Field for publication.

**RESOLVED** that the Clerk obtain the details from the Chairman and pass to Elaine Field.

iii) Remembrance Sunday (min 68/11 i) refers)

The Remembrance Sunday service was well attended and went very well.

iv) Christmas Celebrations (min 68/11 iii) refers)

The delivery, erection and dressing of the Christmas tree went smoothly. The application for a tree grant to purchase a rooted fir tree was not successful as there were too many applications received - the choice of a fir tree was also not viewed favourably by the funders.

v) Registered Traders' Scheme (min 70/11 refers)

Leaflets and business cards advertising the Registered Traders' Scheme had been delivered to the Clerk. It was suggested that information regarding the scheme be included in the next village newsletter.

vi) Neighbourhood Plan (min 70/11 refers)

Cllrs Clarke and Mellors had attended the Neighbourhood Plan information event held at Bowburn. The information dealt mainly with planning issues – new builds, estates etc, and how local groups had successfully stopped builds. GATC are starting their Neighbourhood Plan and a discussion ensued regarding the options for our Parish Council. It was suggested that Andrew Bailey be contacted to discuss the issue, plus the possible arrangement of a local council meeting between MPC and GATC.

**RESOLVED** that Cllr A Clarke contact Andrew Bailey to enquire about GATC plans.

**78/11**

### **ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT**

Members considered a schedule of Accounts for Payment, with additional approval given for payment of £200 to Lyndhurst Nurseries for the purchase of the Christmas tree. Also agreed for future expenditure was the amount of £379 payable to DCC for the erection and dressing of the tree – a cheque would be signed once the invoice was received.

**RESOLVED** that the following accounts be approved for payment:-

C Stenger	Wages Sept – Dec	£230.10
HMRC	Tax liability Sept – Dec	£ 57.40

The addition of authorised signatures was well underway and would hopefully be completed shortly. Access to online statements had been organised for the Clerk but unfortunately this required a debit card which the council does not hold.

**RESOLVED** that the Clerk contact the Business Manager at Barclays to enquire about alternative ways to access online banking.

**79/11**

### **PARISH PRECEPT**

After consideration of the latest available financial information with regards to the Parish Council's accounts, it was proposed by Cllr A Clarke that there should be no increase in the precept amount requested for 2012/13, in line with government policy. It was unanimously agreed that the precept remain at £6,500.

**RESOLVED** that the Parish Precept for 2011/2012 be set at £6,500, and that the Clerk complete the required paperwork and contact DCC.

**The public and press were 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 Paragraphs 1, 2 & 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1985.**

80/11

## **GROUNDNS MAINTENANCE & GENERAL REPAIRS**

i) Grounds Maintenance Works for 2012/13

Consideration was given to the quotations received from contractors invited to submit quotations for the Parish Council's Grounds Maintenance Contract for 2012/13.

**RESOLVED** that, subject to a proviso that the contractor meet with members to discuss issues/concerns raised in the proceeding year, the contract be awarded to SE Landscaping. Also that the Clerk research ways of dealing with mole hills, as requested by SE Landscaping.

ii) Tree Works

Consideration was given to the quotations received from contractors invited to submit quotations for crown lifting works to be undertaken on village green trees.

**RESOLVED** that the contract for tree works be awarded to Oliver's Tree Services.

iii) Honorarium for maintenance of tubs

It was agreed that an honorarium of £10 be made for maintenance of the village flower tubs.

**RESOLVED** that the item be added to the next agenda, and payment be made to Cllr Howe at the next meeting in order for him to distribute funds.

iv) Parish Paths Partnership

The payment for vegetation clearance had been approved and reimbursed. Elaine Field provided a grant application form for 2012/13.

**RESOLVED** that the Clerk contact Ian Hayman to request a quote for vegetation clearance of the Parish paths for 2012/13, and complete the grant application form accordingly.

**The meeting then continued in public session.**

81/11

## **PROPOSED DISPOSAL OF ALLOTMENTS BY DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL, MIDDRIDGE**

The Clerk had contacted Fiona Bullen to get an update on the proposed disposal of the paddock. Fiona advised that the land had been removed from the first auction to allow time to investigate details more fully, but had not yet had time to look into matters further. There would be no progress with the transfer of the allotments until the paddock issue had been decided.

**RESOLVED** that the Clerk contact Fiona again to further request progress details for the next meeting.

82/11

## **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

The planning application for 38 Southside was considered. It was noted that rear access to the pub car park was claimed.

**RESOLVED** that no objections to the application were to be made, but Cllr Mellors was to draw the pub tenants notice to the rear access issue.

83/11

### **CHILDREN'S' PLAY AREA**

Consideration was given to the Clerk's monthly inspection report regarding the condition of the play area and equipment. Cllr A Clarke had investigated the issue of the crack in the seat of a toddler swing and reported that this small surface crack on the short edge of the seat was quite safe. A copy of Zurich's 2011 annual inspection had been received and showed no defects or issues, but did again mention strimmer damage to the wooden structures housing the swings. This had also been inspected and was considered to be safe. Cllr A Clarke reported an issue with moss on the ground play surface.

**RESOLVED** that a working party be arranged to deal with the moss at a suitable date/time.

84/11

### **C35 NEWTON AYCLIFFE TO SHILDON ROAD-TRAFFIC CALMING**

There had been no progress regarding traffic calming. As there were no issues reported from the traffic monitoring, and no accidents involving speeding traffic, it seems that the police are unable to offer further assistance with traffic calming.

There had been an accident involving horses which are grazing loose on the land bordering Middridge allotments and the C35.

**RESOLVED** that the Clerk contact Mick Waterson, Clerk of Shildon Town Council, to enquire about the landowners, and future of the land.

85/11

### **G.A.T.C./MIDDRIDGE AREA ACTION PARTNERSHIP FEEDBACK**

Cllr A Clarke reported that the GAMP forum event had been well attended, with the priorities for the forthcoming year the same as last year:

Activities for Young People

Employment, Enterprise, Education and Training

Support to Community and Voluntary Sector.

It had been suggested that the AAPs administer funding for village halls, with 81% of forum participants agreeing with the proposal.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

86/11

### **FUTURE EVENTS**

i) Queen's Diamond Jubilee

Details of a local supplier who designed and produced weather vanes were perused, and details for a suitable design were discussed. It was proposed that Cllr Clarke look into a supplier previously used also. Permission from Middridge Village Association was needed in order to mount a weather vane on the village hall. Expenditure up to a maximum cost of c£200 was agreed in order to purchase a weather vane once agreement for the mounting had been received.

The Clerk had issued forms to be completed for children interested in receiving souvenirs – approximately 16 completed forms had been received. It was agreed that more research into souvenirs was needed as the official £5 commemorative coins were too costly (£13 each).

**RESOLVED** that the Clerk request mounting permission at the next meeting of the Village Association, and that a weather vane be agreed on and purchased.

ii) Olympic Torch

The route of the Olympic Torch is to include Middridge. DCC are keen for routes to be populated and the event celebrated, and are to provide further details at a meeting to be scheduled shortly. It was suggested that Cllr Howe invite children from Byerley Park school to attend the event.

**RESOLVED** that Cllr Howe contact Byerley Park School and the Clerk speak to the landlord of the Bay Horse regarding the event.

**87/11 DATA PROTECTION ACT 1998 – COUNCILS AND COUNCILLORS**

Cllr Mellors had looked further into the issue of the Data Protection Act and advised that Middridge Parish Council do not need to register.

**88/11 LOCAL COUNCIL DOCUMENTS, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

The Clerk provided all members with a disc containing draft models of documents, policies and procedures suggested as essential by CDALC. It was proposed that these be discussed and considered at the next meeting.

**RESOLVED** that the issue be added to the next agenda for discussion.

**89/11 GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE**

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

DCC – Parish & Town Councillor Register of Interests  
DCC – Electoral Services – Restructure and Relocation  
Coal Industry Social Welfare Organisation

**RESOLVED** that the correspondence be noted.

**90/11 ADDITIONAL ITEMS**

Meeting dates for 2012/13 were agreed as follows:

Monday 5 March 2012 (already arranged)

Monday 14 May 2012

Monday 2 July 2012

Monday 3 September 2012

Monday 5 November 2012

Monday 7 January 2013

**91/11 NEXT MEETING**

Monday 5 March 2012 at 6.45pm.

Chairman \_\_\_\_\_