

Middridge Parish Council

Minutes of Council Meeting

**Village Hall,
Middridge**

**Monday
4th January 2010**

Time:6.45pm

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

Official: N.Hart (Clerk);

61/09 NOTICE OF MEETING

The notice convening the meeting was taken as read.

62/09 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd November 2009 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

63/09 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES

i) Middridge Website (Minute 47/09 refers)

Members expressed their appreciation to the Chairman, Cllr Makinson, for his efforts in establishing the website on behalf of the Parish Council. It was suggested that it would be useful to have contained on the website a comprehensive list of the Parish Council's responsibilities and Cllr Mrs Clarke indicated she would seek to retrieve such information and provide for the website.

ii) Christmas Tree (Minute 47/09 refers)

Reference was made to the Parish Council's wish to provide a permanent tree in future years, situated on the Village Green. It was noted that the tree provided this year, whilst impressive, was a little bit too big and proved difficult to handle. Confirmation of the cost of the tree was awaited from the supplier.

iii) Parish Paths Partnership (Minute 47/09 refers)

Cllr Mrs Clarke advised that it was apparent that the Public Footpath No 21, which was situated within the boundary of Eldon Parish, did not appear to be being

maintained. It was therefore proposed that Cllr Mrs Clarke raise this issue with the relevant officer at DCC.

64/09 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Members considered a schedule of Accounts for Payment; together with the agreed reimbursement of Cllr Mellors who had arranged payment of the costs associated with the last Chairman's Evening; and a proposed payment of £70 in respect of the individuals who maintained both the flower tubs and the War Memorial on behalf of the Parish Council. It was proposed that the Chairman arrange delivery of payment to the individuals concerned.

RESOLVED that the following accounts be approved for payment:-

N.Hart	Salary	£191.67
N.Hart	Postage	£2.34
Cllr Makinson	WHSmith Voucher-R Sunday	£10.00
Cllr Makinson	Maintenance of Flower Tub	£70.00
Cllr Mellors	Chairman's Evening	£141.60

(Councillors Howe and Makinson each declared a personal, prejudicial interest in respect of the proposed payment for maintenance of the flower tubs and War Memorial as they each were currently responsible for carrying out maintenance. Neither spoke nor voted during consideration of the item.)

65/09 PARISH PRECEPT 2010/11

Consideration was given to the Parish Precept for 2010/2011 based on the latest available financial information with regards to the Parish Council's accounts.

RESOLVED that the Parish Precept for 2010/2011 be set at £6,250.

66/09 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE & GENERAL REPAIRS

i) Grounds Maintenance or General Repairs Issues

Consideration was given to the existing condition of the flower tubs maintained by members of the public on behalf of the Parish Council, which had begun to deteriorate with one having been totally demolished by a vehicle. It was proposed that replacement tubs be procured at a maximum cost of £30 per tub, preferably in a black finish.

RESOLVED that Cllr Makinson be authorised to carry out the procurement of replacement flower tubs, as identified.

ii) Parish Paths Partnership 2010/11

Consideration was given to participation in the Durham County Council Parish Paths Partnership scheme for 2010/2011. Should participation continue, it was proposed that the number of cuts be increased to three so as to ensure that the paths were clear of vegetation all year round.

It was proposed that an invitation to quote be extended to the contractors previously approved by DCC, and that any quotations received be considered at the next meeting with a view to a preferred contractor being identified and thereafter a formal Parish Paths application be submitted to DCC.

Reference was also made to problems associated with anti social behaviour on the public footpath to the rear of 10 Houses at Walker Lane. It was noted that residents had again raised the subject of a gate access being installed to alleviate the problem, and prevent any unauthorised vehicular access, but maintain access for the public, including the disabled, as well as its use as a bridleway. This solution had previously been suggested to DCC by the Parish Council some years ago, however DCC had felt unable to proceed with the scheme due to problems associated with the necessary access required by the adjacent land and property holders and the costs involved in purchasing such a gate. It was suggested however that the issue be again raised with the Public Rights of Way Officer at DCC in the hope that the issue could again be reconsidered.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The Clerk be authorised to invite quotations from the following contractors based on an enhanced specification of three cuts during the term of the contract:-
 - I.H
 - T.C.W
2. The problems associated with the public footpath at Walker Lane to the rear of 10 Houses, be referred to the Public Rights of Way Officer at DCC.

67/09

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED that the press and public be 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.

68/09 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT 2010/11

Consideration was given to the award of the Parish Council's Grounds Maintenance Contract for 2010/2011 following the receipt of three invited quotations.

RESOLVED that the Parish Council's Grounds Maintenance contract be awarded to CEW in accordance with the submitted terms.

The meeting then continued in public session.

69/09 PROPOSED DISPOSAL OF ALLOTMENTS BY DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL, MIDDRIDGE

No further progress had been noted following GAMP's indication of support for the Parish Council to acquire the future ownership and maintenance responsibility for the allotments from DCC. A further meeting of GAMP was to be held on 28th January 2010, and Cllr Mrs Clarke advised that she would enquire there as to whether any progress had been made.

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

70/09 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Consideration was given to the following planning application received:-

-Application to Regularise Unauthorised Building Works Including Longer projection, Increased Width of Rear Projection and Altered Roof Pitch- 38 Southside, Middridge .

The Clerk advised that on-line details for the application had not been available on DCC's website, making it impossible to provide members with any clarity regarding the application. It was proposed that an extension to the time limit given for commenting on the application be requested from DCC; and that members reconvene at the earliest opportunity to consider the

application and forward comments on to the Clerk for submission to DCC.

RESOLVED that DCC be advised of the Parish Council's comments as outlined above, and members give further consideration to the above application at the earliest opportunity.

71/09 CHILDRENS' 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 due to the current adverse weather conditions, it had proven impossible for the Clerk to carry out an adequate inspection at the beginning of this month. It was therefore proposed that an inspection be deferred until such time as the weather conditions allowed.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

72/09 GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

The following correspondence was noted:-

- i) DCC/CDALC-Local Councils Charter Event-Saturday 16th January 2010

Councillor Makinson to attend.

- ii) DCC Admission Arrangements

The Parish Council's previous comments in respect of its strongly held desire that parents be afforded the right to send their children to the nearest school, be reiterated to DCC.

73/09 GAMP- AREA ACTION PARTNERSHIP-FEEDBACK

Consideration was given to feedback from the GAMP Area Action Partnership event held on 1st December 2009. Particular reference was paid to the success of the many youth projects, including those over the Xmas period.

An update was also provided as to the likely timescale for commencement of the environmental projects earmarked for the Millennium Hedge and to provide fixed table/seating within the Children's Play Area.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

74/09

ADDITIONAL ITEMS

Reference was made to discussions held during the earlier PACT meeting immediately prior to this meeting regarding problems bus passengers had experienced in the Village due to drivers either travelling too fast through the Village to let passengers get off safely; or by ignoring passengers waiting in the shelter of the bus stops, sheltered from the cold. It was suggested that these concerns be forwarded on by the Clerk to Arriva Buses.

75/09

NEXT MEETING

Monday, 10th May 2010 at 6.50pm