

APPROVED

Middridge Parish Council

Minutes of Council Meeting

Village Hall,
Middridge

Monday
6th March, 2017

Time: 6.45 pm

Present: Cllrs A Clarke (Chair), W Mellors, W J Clarke, P Makinson & H Howe

In attendance: Cllrs J Gray, M Dixon & J Clare (DCC)
Mr S & Mrs S Smith

Official: A D Jordan (Clerk)

20/17 NOTICE OF MEETING

The Notice convening the Meeting was taken as read.

21/17 DEFIBRILLATOR PROJECT

David Sutton-Lloyd gave a Presentation on the GAMP Defibrillator Project, which included a brief demonstration of a Defibrillator. The Installation of a Defibrillator on the Bay Horse can proceed as soon as Middridge has made its promised contribution towards the Costs.

Action: Clerk

22/17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None

23/17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllrs M Dixon & J Clare announced an Interest in Agenda Items 8 & 10, because they are Members of the DCC Planning Committee.

24/17 MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

None

25/17 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting of 9th January 2017 were accepted, and signed by the Chair as a true record.

26/17 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES

None

27/17 PERSIMMON "ELDON WHINS" DEVELOPMENT & THE COUNTY PLAN

The HCA "Eldon Whins" Outline Planning Application is to be considered by the DCC Planning Committee on Tuesday, 7th March; DCC Planning Services have recommended that this Application should be approved.

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The Chair will represent the Parish Council before the Committee, and details of her proposed Objections to this Planning Application have been circulated to the Parish Council, and agreed.

The proposed Section 106 Agreement was discussed, particularly why there was so much money allocated for DCC Allotments Improvements, whereas the Play Area is not mentioned. It was noted that the Parish Council had not been consulted regarding this matter, and the Chair will raise it with the Planning Committee.

Action: Cllr A Clarke

28/17

GROUND MAINTENANCE & GENERAL REPAIRS

(i) DCC proposed Street Light Removal

A Letter has been sent to Yvonne Edwards asking for a breakdown of the Cost of a possible SLA, but no reply has been received to date.

Mrs S Smith expressed her concerns for the Safety of Pedestrians using Walker Lane when the Street Lights are removed.

(ii) Village Green Trees

There has still been no progress in inspecting the large Ash Tree on the Play Area, which is planned when DCC attend to prune one of their Trees; this is to be chased.

Action: Clerk

(iii) 2017 Parish Paths Maintenance

The Parish Paths Partnership (PPP) have just announced that Funds are available for this year's Grants, and a completed Grant Application Form has been submitted. The PPP have acknowledged receipt of this Application, stating that it should be acceptable, but this needs to be confirmed.

(iv) The 'Durham Ask'

The 'Durham Ask', which would see the Parish Council taking over responsibility from DCC for certain local services, was again discussed. It was noted that the Council could almost certainly cut the DCC (and Livin) owned areas of Land in the Village for less money, but since the 'Durham Ask' cannot provide any Funds, there is no incentive for the Council to take on this additional financial burden.

29/17

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Nothing to report.

30/17

CHILDREN'S' PLAY AREA

The Clerk's Monthly Inspection report was approved.

There has been no progress on planned Repairs, nor on the provision of a laminated Notice for the Play Area.

Action: Clerk

31/17

C35 NEWTON AYCLIFFE TO SHILDON ROAD-TRAFFIC CALMING

Although the 40 mph Sign at the top of 'Shildon Bank' has been moved, there is as yet no sign of the Traffic Light Installation; our DCC Councillors will investigate.

The damaged Police Speed 'Sculptures' have now been repaired. The Council expressed it thanks to David & Leslie Beavis, and Allan Wilson, for their excellent work. It is planned to reinstall the Sculptures at an Official Reopening, planned for the Spring; details to be confirmed.

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Action: Cllr A Clarke

The PACT Meeting has been told that more Police Speed Guns are now available, with faster arrangements for the necessary calibration, and we can expect to see further Speed Checks in the Village in the near future.

32/17 “THE PADDOCK”

The Funding for the DCC Project to turn ‘the Paddock’ into a ‘Wildflower Grassland’, is included in the Proposed “Eldon Whins” Section 106 Agreement.

33/17 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

In the course of an Investigation of the Parish Council’s Records to establish what has been made public regarding the Neighbourhood Plan (NP), it was discovered that the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group (NPWG) has never been formally constituted by the Parish Council. This is important because of the need to demonstrate that Community Engagement has informed the Policies of the NP.

Cllr J Clare suggested we should check that the Parish Council could be the Authorised Body for running the NP; Shaun Hanson is to be consulted.

Action: Clerk

RESOLVED that the NPWG is formally constituted to develop the NP on behalf of the Parish Council, subject to the above.

Shaun Hanson was given a conducted Tour of the Parish, which will assist him in preparing the Questions for a proposed new round of Community Engagement.

Cllr M Dixon advised that the NPWG should liaise closely with DCC to maximise the chances of the NP being finally approved. He also suggested that if the HCA Planning Application was approved, this would fulfil the Parish’s “quota” of new Housing for the duration of the NP.

34/17 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

(i) Accounts for Payment

Councillors considered a Schedule of Accounts for Payment.

RESOLVED that the following Accounts be approved for payment:-

Payee	Purpose	Sum
Planning Advice Plus *	First NP Training Workshop	£765.30
Planning Advice Plus *	Second NP Training Workshop	£765.30
David Beavis *	Speed Sculpture Repairs	£110.85
A. D. Jordan	Clerk’s Jan – Mar Salary	£217.30
HMRC	Clerk’s Jan – Mar Tax	£145.20
J Harron	Thirsk Payroll Services	£61.00
D Johnson	Christmas Tree Supply	£240.00
A. D. Jordan	Clerk’s 2016/17 Expenses	£132.08
CDALC	Clerk’s Elections Training Course	£27.00
	TOTAL	£2464.03

* with the agreement of Councillors, these Cheques have already been issued, and hence the Approval given is retrospective.

(ii) Clerk’s Pension

The Clerk has submitted the Parish Council’s Declaration of Compliance to the Pensions Regulator; Receipt has been acknowledged. No further Action necessary.

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(iv) 2016/17 Accounts Audit

The Clerk has agreed the Arrangements for our Internal Auditor (Colin Gray) to receive and return these Accounts.

35/17

GAMP & CDALC

The Clerk reported that the GAMP Board have agreed the Project Themes for 2017/18 as follows:-

- (a) Children, Young People & Families
- (b) Employment, Enterprise & Training
- (c) Older People

As usual, these Themes were chosen as the result of a Public Vote.

The Board agreed that in order to standardise the Area Budget Allocation Process with other AAPs, they will use the 'Project Callout' System for 2017/18. This involves the Project Task Groups agreeing the Project Priorities for their Project Themes, which are again chosen as the result of the Public Vote.

Interested Parties are then asked to submit Project Proposals to meet these Priorities; note that Project Task Groups **CANNOT** make Project Proposals (which they could in the past). Owing to "Purdah", the Process of requesting Project Proposals will not begin until after the May Council Elections.

Cllr A Clarke reported that the County Durham Association of Local Councils (CDALC) have appointed Mazars LLP to act as External Auditors in the event of any dispute regarding the Parish Council's Accounts under the new Audit Arrangements which come into force from 2017/18.

CDALC are also preparing a new Model "Code of Conduct" (which is one of the Council's Statutory Policies). Cllr A Clarke recommended that the new Council consider adopting this Model once it has been approved.

It is hoped to organise another Event allowing CDALC Members to meet and discuss Issues with our Local MPs later in the year.

36/17

GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

Nothing to report.

37/17

OTHER MATTERS

(i) 2017/18 Parish Council Meeting Dates

RESOLVED that the proposed 2017/18 Parish Council Meeting Dates be accepted.
Action: Clerk

(ii) Arrangements for the New Council

The Clerk reported on his recent CDALC Training Session on Elections.

Nomination Papers for those wishing to stand in the 4th May Parish Council Election are available from the Clerk; details of the Submission Dates will be circulated.

Action: Clerk

By law, although not standing for re-election, Anne Clarke continues to be the Chair of the Council until the Annual Parish Council Meeting in May, which she should

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preside over until a new Chair is elected. The Vice-Chair is not required to sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

The Parish Council's "Standing Orders" and "Financial Regulations" must be formally adopted at every Annual Parish Council Meeting (held in May). The Clerk recommended that the new Council should also formally re-adopt the Council's other Statutory Policies.

Two possible new Councillors to replace Cllrs A and J Clarke, who are not standing for re-election, have been identified, and discussions are in hand.

Action: Cllr A Clarke & Clerk

(iii) 39, South Side Parking

Following another Incident of Illegal Parking on the Village Green, the Clerk spoke to the person responsible, Andrew Trebilcock, who claimed not to have received the Parish Council's Letter regarding this (although personally posted in his Letterbox). He also complained about the lack of Parking Places in the Village; the offending Vehicle was removed shortly afterwards.

38/17

ADDITIONAL ITEMS

(i) Expressions of Thanks

Cllr J Clare, on behalf of all our DCC Councillors, expressed their thanks for the courteous way in which they had been received by the Parish Council.

In turn, Cllr A Clarke expressed the thanks of the Parish Council for all the help provided by our DCC Councillors over the past four years.

(ii) Parking

It was noted that Vehicles 'For Sale' are again being illegally parked in the Lay-by by the Post Box.

(iii) Graffiti

Racist Graffiti have appeared on one of the 30mph Signs, and the Gas Pumping Station; these need to be removed.

Action: Clerk

39/17

NEXT MEETING

The Statutory Annual Meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Monday, 15th May, 2017, following the Statutory Annual Parish Meeting at 6.45pm.

Chair _____