

APPROVED

Middridge Parish Council

Minutes of Council Meeting

Village Hall,
Middridge

Monday
5th January, 2015

Time: 6.45 pm

Present: Cllrs A Clarke (Chairwoman), J Clarke, W Mellors, H Howe, P Makinson.

In attendance: Cllr J Clare (DCC). Cllr W Dixon and J Gray (DCC) were present for part of the Meeting.

Official: A D Jordan (Clerk)

1/15 NOTICE OF MEETING

The Notice convening the Meeting was taken as read.

2/15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None

3/15 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

4/15 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 3rd November 2014 were signed by the Chairwoman as a true record.

5/15 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES

(i) Village Green Maintenance (113/14 ii refers)

The Flower Bed in front of 29, North Side has been tidied up.

(ii) Remembrance Sunday (126/14 refers)

The Police have asked that in future the Residents of North Side should be requested not to park their cars on the "bypass" route around the War Memorial.

Action: Clerk

It was noted that Angie Sowerby was available to play the Bugle in future.

(iii) Additional Items (128/14 refers)

The Presentation to our DCC Councillors in thanks for their support with the new Allotments Access Road, the War Memorial refurbishment, and the Village Hall Rendering was much appreciated.

6/15 PROPOSED PERSIMMON "ELDON WHINS" DEVELOPMENT

An initial Objection to the Persimmon Planning Application for "Eldon Whins" has been lodged with the DCC Strategic Planning Office. It is understood that the Persimmon Planning Application is unlikely to be progressed further until the situation with regard to the Persimmon Objection to the Draft County Plan (see below) is resolved; Cllr W Dixon offered to clarify this.

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RESOLVED that a detailed Objection to the Persimmon Planning Application for “Eldon Whins” be prepared, circulated to Councillors for their approval, and lodged with the DCC Strategic Planning Office.

Action: *Cllr A Clarke & Clerk*

It has been discovered that Persimmon have lodged an Objection to the Draft County Plan, arguing that the area referred to as “Eldon Whins” should be extended to include their proposed Development. It is considered important that a Counter-Objection should be made, as otherwise the Government Inspector might accept the Persimmon Objection on the basis that it was unopposed by local Residents, and in that case the Persimmon Planning Application for “Eldon Whins” would almost certainly be successful. Unfortunately it is now too late for the Parish Council to lodge such a Counter-Objection. However, the DCC Planning Department will be opposing the Persimmon Objection, and it is considered that their case would be strengthened if they were made aware of the Parish Council's objections to any development at “Eldon Whins”.

RESOLVED that a Letter detailing the Parish Council's opposition to any development at “Eldon Whins” be prepared, circulated to Councillors for their approval, and sent to Stuart Timmis (Head of the DCC Planning Department).

Action: *Cllr A Clarke & Clerk*

Cllr W Mellors has lodged a personal Objection to the inclusion of Development at “Eldon Whins” in the Draft County Plan. Unfortunately, there is some confusion as to whether this Objection has been accepted, or considered as an Objection to the Persimmon Planning Application; this needs to be resolved.

Action: *Cllr W Mellors*

7/15

GROUND'S MAINTENANCE & GENERAL REPAIRS

(i) Parish Paths Maintenance

RESOLVED that Ian Hayman's Quotation for next year's Parish Paths Maintenance (based on two Cuts) of £840 + VAT be accepted.

Action: *Clerk*

(ii) Village Green Maintenance

RESOLVED that Ian Hayman's Quotation for next year's Village Green Maintenance of £1845 + VAT be accepted.

Action: *Clerk*

Ian Hayman has complained that the presence of Tables in front of the Bay Horse is interfering with his cutting the grass on this part of the Village Green.

RESOLVED that a Letter be sent to the Publican of the Bay Horse, reminding him that the land in front of the Bay Horse is part of the Village Green, and unless he undertakes to remove the Tables to facilitate the Council's grass-cutting, he will have to undertake to maintain this area himself.

Action: *Clerk*

It has been established that the remaining work on the Millennium Hedge should be completed this winter.

(iii) Tree Management

There has been no further progress on the Draft Tree Management Policy. Cllr H Howe and the Clerk undertook to complete this Draft Policy, which will be circulated to all Councillors for comment, with a view to its being adopted at the next Meeting.

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(iv) Pavement Maintenance

Following representations by Cllr J Clare, the DCC Highways Department have accepted that they are responsible for the maintenance of the Pavements in front of No's 1 -7 North Side, and around "The Meadows" and "Meadows Edge". This should be confirmed when the DCC Map of "Adopted" Roads & Pavements is updated; this needs to be checked.

Action: Clerk

(v) Bus Shelter

Part of the Roof of the Bus Shelter on North Side has come down, and much of the Roof is suffering from water ingress, although it is not clear whether the collapse was due to natural causes, or someone climbing on the Roof. Cllr P Makinson said that "John the Handyman" was qualified to undertake such repairs. Although not intended for this purpose, the new Roof must still be strong enough to support anyone who climbs onto it; Andrew Bailey could advise about the required strength.

RESOLVED that a Quotation be obtained from "John the Handyman" for a new Bus Shelter Roof.

Action: Clerk

(vi) C35 Fire Damage Repairs

It has been established that the DCC Highways Department have no current plans to repair the fire-damaged road near 36 – 37 South Side.

(vii) Parish Noticeboard

The Parish Noticeboard came down during the recent strong winds, damaging the bonnet of the Clerk's car. "John the Handyman" has provided a verbal Estimate of £250 – £300 for repairs. It is understood that this Noticeboard was erected by the DCC Parish Paths Partnership, who have been contacted as to whether they can fund repairs. If not, the Parish Council will need to make a Claim on their Insurance.

Action: Clerk

8/15

PROPOSED DISPOSAL OF ALLOTMENTS BY DCC

A Pre-Planning Application to change the Registered Use of the "the Paddock" (and if necessary the Allotments) to "Allotments", has been submitted.

Cllr W Mellors believes he has found a photograph in the County Archives which he believes proves that the Land in question was used as Allotments in the past, which is disputed by DCC, but further work is required.

Action: Cllr W Mellors

9/15

COMMUNITY RIGHT TO BID

The Bay Horse and the Village Hall have been successfully registered as Assets of Community Value under the Localism Act's Community Right to Bid Scheme. DCC have confirmed that they have received Applications for the "The Paddock" and the Allotments, and these are currently being processed.

10/15

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

No new Planning Applications have been submitted since the last Council Meeting.

It is understood from a recent article in the Northern Echo that Persimmon are planning to extend their 'Middridge Vale' Development on the outskirts of Shildon, but the Parish Council have not been informed of this; to be investigated.

Action: Clerk

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11/15 CHILDREN'S' PLAY AREA

The Clerk's routine Monthly Inspections show no problems. Our Insurer's Annual Inspection Report has just arrived; to be studied.

Action: Clerk

12/15 C35 NEWTON AYCLIFFE TO SHILDON ROAD-TRAFFIC CALMING

This remains the PACT Priority.

RESOLVED that Letters be sent to Arriva, Live-in, Garnetts and International Waste Metals, complaining about their Vehicles speeding.

Action: Clerk

13/15 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

A Meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group was held, but apparently the Notes of this Meeting have not been circulated.

Action: Cllr W Mellors

RESOLVED that a further Meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group be organised as soon as practical, to particularly consider Areas for Protection, Improvement & Development.

Action: Cllr W Mellors

14/15 GATC COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

GATC continue to make little progress in their attempt to obtain signatures for their Petition for a Community Governance Review of the "Eldon Whins" area.

15/15 STATUTORY POLICIES

Draft new Statutory Policies have been circulated to all Councillors.

RESOLVED that the new Draft Policies should be studied with a view to some at least of them being adopted at the next Council Meeting.

Action: Councillors

16/15 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Councillors considered a Schedule of Accounts for Payment.

RESOLVED that the following Accounts be approved for payment:-

CDALC	Clerk's Training Course	£ 27.00
Lynhurst Nurseries	Christmas Tree	£ 180.00

17/15 BUDGET/PRECEPT SETTING 2015/16

Next year the Council's Precept will increase due to a rise in the Tax Base, but the Council's Income will fall due to a reduction in the LCTRS Grant paid by DCC; the Net effect is a reduction of £29.43.

There was general agreement that as the Precept has not been increased for several years, and the Council faces increased expenditure for Repairs, and further future reductions in the LCTRS Grant, that the Precept ought to be increased.

RESOLVED that the Parish Council's Precept for 2015/16 be increased by 1.5%.

Action: Clerk

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18/15 GAMP - AREA ACTION PARTNERSHIP – FEEDBACK

The next Board Meeting will be on 20th January at 6.00 pm in the GATC Council Offices.

19/15 GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

(i) Royal Garden Party

RESOLVED that the names of Cllrs Anne and John Clarke be submitted for the DCC Ballot for attendance at this year's Royal Garden Party.

Action: Clerk

20/15 ADDITIONAL ITEMS

(i) 2015/16 Parish Council Meeting Dates

RESOLVED that the proposed 2015/16 Parish Council Meeting Dates be accepted.

Action: Clerk

21/15 NEXT MEETING

Monday, 2nd March 2015 at 6.45pm.

Chairwoman _____