

**Middridge Parish Council**

**Village Hall,  
Middridge**

**Minutes of Council Meeting  
Monday  
7<sup>th</sup> March 2011**

**Time:6.45pm**

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

**Official:** N.Hart (Clerk);

**78/10 NOTICE OF MEETING**

The notice convening the meeting was taken as read.

**79/10 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2011 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record subject to deletion of the unnecessary paragraph at Min 68/10 and clarification at Min 75/10 of GAMP Forum/Board meetings.

**80/10 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES**

**i) Maintenance Issues (Minute 64/10 refers)**

The Clerk advised that the outstanding invoices related to the financial years 5/6 and 6/7 had now been paid. Further bills for energy used from this period onwards were expected some time from this April onwards and were estimated to be for a similar amount initially, decreasing to £72 for 8/9 and 9/10.

**81/10 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT**

Members considered a schedule of Accounts for Payment.

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

N.Hart	Salary	£191.65
N.Hart	Postage	£1.23
Durham County Council	Xmas Lights decoration	£374.83

## **GROUNDS MAINTENANCE & GENERAL REPAIRS**

### i) Grounds Maintenance or General Repairs Issues

It was noted that work on the outstanding repairs to the wooden seat bench would be carried out shortly.

Reference was also made to complaints received regarding dog mess in Walker Lane. It was suggested that an appropriate article be placed in the residents newsletter and that the local dog warden be advised of the situation.

### ii) Maintenance of the Millenium Hedge

The Clerk advised that a representative from Groundwork North East had been identified to assist the Council with advice and possibly practical help insofar as the future maintenance of the Millenium Hedge was concerned. Further details would be advised to members in due course.

### iii ) Proposed Erection of a Gate across Public Footpath No 5, Middridge Farms

Consideration was given to the necessary design requirements for the proposed gate suggested as a means of controlling unauthorised behaviour in this area.

It was noted that ownership and status of the land in question was in doubt, with DCC advising that they considered the land to be un-adopted and therefore not eligible for funding within their Parish Paths Partnership scheme.

PC Stasiak had followed up previous concerns expressed by Michael Straughier at Police Headquarters but had received no further response.

It was proposed therefore that the Chairman discuss with the proposed contractor design options in order to progress the works.

**RESOLVED** that progression of agreement of the design of the proposed gateway continue as outlined.

## **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.

iv) Application for Parish Paths Funding 2011/12

Consideration was given to the quotation received from the Council's preferred contractor in respect of this Council's proposed application to DCC for Parish Paths Funding for 2011/12.

**RESOLVED** that the quotation be approved and an appropriate application for funding be submitted to DCC.

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

**83/10**

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

The latest indication from DCC was that a decision confirming the transfer of the allotments was expected in the next two weeks. It was suggested that, should this be the case, the allotment tenants could be requested to defer payment of their annual rent so that the full rent could be paid to Middridge P.C., as opposed to DCC.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted and subject to DCC advising of their decision within the above timescale, a request be made that the allotment tenants defer payment of their rent until the transfer of responsibility for the allotments to Middridge P.C. be confirmed.

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

**84/10**

**PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

The Clerk advised that no planning applications for the Parish had been received.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

**85/10**

**CHILDRENS' PLAY AREA**

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

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

86/10

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

Further to recent Police monitoring of traffic speed through the village, members referred to the possibility of the Parish Council obtaining an appropriate permanent traffic sign warning/recording excessive speed. It was suggested that Cllr Mrs Clarke raise the issue with County Councillor Mrs Bowman.

**RESOLVED** that the matter be raised and the outcome be reported to the next meeting.

87/10

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

Councillor Mrs Clarke advised that GAMP had confirmed the following as its priorities for the next year:-

- i) Activities for Young People
- ii) Support for the Voluntary & Community Sector
- iii) Employment, Job Prospects & New Enterprise

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

88/10

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- i) Plants for Flower Tubs

Members were advised that Bluebell Nurseries had confirmed the Parish Council could have whatever number/type of plants they required for the purpose of filling the flower tubs in the village provided they were collected by the Parish Council from the Nursery. It was proposed that Cllr Howe arrange collection.

- ii) Northumbria in Bloom-Bulb Planting Challenge

Details were confirmed of the event taking place at County Hall on the 9<sup>th</sup> April 2011.

- iii) Further to the last meeting, Cllr Mrs Clarke advised that the Limestone Landscapes Partnership had been unable to provide any assistance with regard to eligibility for funding/advice that would assist the Council in its future plans for the paddock/allotments as its plans did not seem to identify the existence of magnesian limestone within this part of the village. They had however suggested

another possible source of assistance, whom Cllr Clarke would contact for advice.

iv) Village Fete-2<sup>nd</sup> July 2011

Consideration was given a request from Middridge Residents Association for permission from the Parish Council for them to use the Village Green as part of their Village Fete celebrations on the 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2011.

The Parish Council was also invited to consider offering a donation towards one of the raffle prizes.

**RESOLVED** that the Residents Association be granted permission for use of the Village Green as part of their Village Fete celebrations on the 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2011, and a donation of £40 be offered by the Parish Council towards one of the raffle prizes.

(Cllrs Clarke, Mellors and Makinson each declared a Personal, Non Prejudicial interest in respect of this item as each were members of the Residents Association.)

v) Great British Elm Planting Experiment

Cllr Howe advised that organisers of the above experiment had been in contact with him to discuss the Parish Council taking receipt of an elm sapling in the near future. It was proposed that The Docks would be an appropriate location for the tree and it was suggested that Cllrs Howe and Makinson arrange to take delivery and carry out planting of the tree as soon as possible.

vi) Litter Free Durham

Consideration was given to participation in the above event. It was proposed that an event be organised for Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2011 and be advertised in the Parish Newsletter. Anyone interested in participating to meet at the Parish Notice Board at 10.00am.

(i) Resignation of Parish Clerk-N.Hart

The Parish Clerk confirmed that due to imminent anticipated additional work responsibility in respect of his full time job, which would ultimately have an affect on his time available for other matters, he had, after some considerable thought, tendered his resignation in respect of his duties as Parish Clerk of Middridge Parish Council.

In doing so, he thanked all members of the Parish Council for their support, advice and kindness during his term of employment and advised that he would officially stand down as Clerk from the 1<sup>st</sup> April, he would happily assist the Council in their efforts to secure a replacement and be available at the next meeting to hopefully advise the new Clerk.

**89/10**

**NEXT MEETING**

Monday, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2011 at 6.50pm (or immediately following the Annual Parish Meeting commencing at 6.45pm).