

Middridge Parish Council

Minutes of Council Meeting

**Village Hall,
Middridge**

**Monday
16th May 2011**

Time:6.50pm

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

Official: CA Stenger (Clerk)

In attendance: Cllr Mrs D Bowman

1/11 NOTICE OF MEETING

The notice convening the meeting was taken as read.

2/11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies received.

3/11 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL

RESOLVED that Councillor H Howe be appointed Chairman of the Council for the 2011/2012 Municipal Year.

4/11 DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

RESOLVED that the Declaration of Acceptance of Office was received.

5/11 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL

RESOLVED that Councillor Mrs A Clarke be appointed Vice of the Council for the 2011/2012 Municipal Year.

6/11 DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

RESOLVED that the Declaration of Acceptance of Office was received.

7/11 NOTIFICATION OF PERSONAL INTERESTS/RECEIPT OF GIFTS OR HOSPITALITY

RESOLVED that the notification of personal interests be received, to be returned to the Council by the clerk within 28 days.

8/11 THANKS TO OUTGOING CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED that the thanks of the Parish Council be recorded to the outgoing Chairman Councillor Clarke for the duties carried out during his term of office.

9/11 APPOINTMENT OF PARISH CLERK

RESOLVED that the appointment of Carol Ann Stenger as the new Parish Clerk be recorded. Also that the thanks of the Parish Council be recorded to the outgoing clerk Nigel Hart for the duties carried out during his term of appointment.

10/11 MINUTES

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

11/11 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES

Grounds Maintenance & General Repairs

- i) The previous clerk advised that no further bills had yet been received from Npower (minute 80/10 refers)
- ii) The wooden bench repairs had been completed by Cllr J Clarke (minute 82/10 refers).
- iii) The planting of the elm tree in The Docks area had been completed by Cllrs Howe and Makinson (minute 88/10 v refers).

RESOLVED that Cllr Makinson would register the species of the elm tree and record the growth for the Great British Elm Planting Experiment.

- iv) The Litter Free Durham event had taken place (minute 88/10 vi refers)

12/11 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
SE Landscaping	Grasscutting - April	£188.00
JWS Power Wash	Bush Shelter Cleaning x 2	£60.00
Zurich Municipal Insurance	Local Council Policy incl.	
	Play Area insurance	£878.88
Middridge Village Association	Middridge Mercury	£18.00

13/11 ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2011

Consideration was given to the finalised accounts for the period ended 31st March 2011 which were currently the subject of internal audit and would be submitted for approval by the Council before submission with the Council's Annual Return to the external auditor. It was also noted that reclaiming of VAT for 2010/11 was still to be carried out.

RESOLVED that the Clerk submit the accounts for approval by the Council as soon as they are returned by the internal auditor and to complete the necessary paperwork to recover VAT.

14/11 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 had been completed by Cllr J Clarke.

A detrimental comment regarding the mowing of the grass in the Play Area had been received.

RESOLVED that the quality of the maintenance be monitored and discussed again at the next meeting and for the Clerk to contact the contractor to request that the Village Green be mown the week commencing 27 June 2011 in anticipation of the Village Fete.

ii) Maintenance of the Millennium Hedge

Cllr Mrs A Clarke had met with a representative of East Durham Groundwork Trust who had been very positive about the condition of the hedge and suggested that the hedge be layed when it had achieved 1-3 years further growth. The cost of laying was discussed, with the representative advising of their practice of using one professional only with volunteers carrying out the majority of the work, which would keep costs down. The maintenance of the undergrowth below and behind the hedge was discussed.

RESOLVED that Cllr Mrs A Clarke contact Ian Grey, Voluntary Countryside Ranger, with reference to evaluation and assistance regarding the undergrowth from the Countryside Volunteers.

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

The proposed gate had been completed and was now erected.

iv) Parish Paths Partnership

The Chairman reported that there was a tree down on the northern leg of Path 2. He had contacted Elaine Field, Countryside Officer, and she is to contact the landowner.

15/11

PROPOSED DISPOSAL OF ALLOTMENTS BY DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL, MIDDRIDGE

There had been no contact from DCC regarding the transfer; however Cllr Mrs D Bowman reported that she had been informed of a transfer date of June. The request for the allotment tenants to defer payment of their annual rent had not been agreed to.

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

16/11

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

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

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

17/11 CHILDREN'S' PLAY AREA

Consideration was given to the Clerk's monthly inspection report regarding the condition of the play area and equipment. There was an issue with the safety of a net which had been attached to the goal posts without the knowledge of the Parish Council. It was also noted that an inspection of the Play Area by Zurich was overdue.

RESOLVED that the report be noted and that the Chairman and Cllr Clarke would inspect the net and decide on action, and that the Clerk contact Zurich to request an inspection.

18/11 C35 NEWTON AYCLIFFE TO SHILDON ROAD-TRAFFIC CALMING

The matter of obtaining an appropriate traffic sign warning of excessive speed had been raised; however, a negative response had been received from Mr Straugheir, Traffic Management Officer, Durham Police.

RESOLVED that the Clerk contact Mr Straugheir to request a meeting to discuss the issue in more detail.

19/11 G.A.T.C./MIDDRIDGE AREA ACTION PARTNERSHIP FEEDBACK

Cllr Mrs Clarke advised of a Board meeting to be held on Tuesday 24th May at 6pm, Woodham Community Centre, and also an Overview and Scrutiny Review of Action Partnerships to be held Tuesday 14th June, 4.20pm – 6pm at the Agnew Community Centre. A report was given regarding new funding priorities.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

20/11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The following correspondence was noted from DCC – County Durham Plan Consultation 23rd May 2011.

21/11 NEXT MEETING

Monday, 4th July 2011 at 6.45pm

Chairman _____