



Middleton St George Parish Council

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Minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Parish Council held at 6.30pm on Monday 16th January, 2017 in the Parish Council office.

Present: Councillor C. Pease (Chairman),
Mrs. E. Robertson (Vice Chairman)
Councillor Mrs. M Beadle,
Councillor S. Crowther,
Councillor C Everett,
Councillor Mrs. C. Gilsenan,
Councillor Mrs. V. Greenwell,
Councillor A. Hill,
Councillor M. Robertson,
Councillor M. Wilson,
Alan Macnab, Clerk

126. Chairman's Opening Address

The Chairman made no announcements.

127. Annual Meeting of the Parish Council

The Parish Council discussed the arrangements for the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council in May.

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Following a discussion, the Parish Council **agreed** that the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council take place in May, one week before the Ordinary meeting of the Parish Council for May 2017.

128. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Borough Councillors B. Jones, Mrs. D. Jones and S. York.

129. Declarations of Interests

No declarations of interests were made.

130. Minutes of the last Parish Council meeting held on the 12th December, 2016

The minutes of the last meeting held on the 12th December, 2016 were presented. The Parish

Chairman's Signature..... Date.....

Council **agreed** that they were a true record of the proceedings. The Chairman signed the minutes.

131. Matters Arising

a. Review of utility costs

The Chairman reported that he had been informed by Scottish Power, the supplier of gas to the Parish Council offices that the Parish Council owes an estimated £4,400 because the bills had not been processed, despite being provided with the readings. However, under their back-billing procedure this would be reduced to £1,700. The Chairman dismissed the estimated bill for 2016 as preposterous and had written to Scottish Power challenging their calculations. Discussions were on-going with Scottish Power and further reports would be made.

b. Allotments

The Clerk reported that he had received a response from the owner of the Belle View Allotments asking for which allotments were flooding, the solutions to the problems and the minimum lease term to secure funding. The Clerk had liaised with Councillor Everett and had forwarded the further information which Councillor Everett had supplied to the owner of the allotments. Councillor Everett clarified that the request for an extension of the lease was to seek grant aid for pathways, improve security and to alleviate flooding. The Clerk will write to the owner of Belle View Allotments with this information.

The Clerk reported that he had not received a reply from the owner of the Killinghall Row Allotments but would write to him again.

c. Keyholders and Signing in Procedures

The Clerk reported that a new padlock for the front door to the Parish Council offices had been purchased and seven keys had been cut. He distributed three keys to the Chairman, Councillor Mrs. Beadle and Councillor M. Robertson and would ensure that the three hirers also received the new keys. The procedures for signing in and out of the building would be explained to the hirers.

The Parish Council **agreed** to take the report on the allotments off the agenda of future Parish Council meetings and noted the report on matters arising from the last Parish Council meeting.

132 Request for the siting of a Memorial Bench on The Front, Middleton One Row.

The Clerk reported that a request had been received from Linzi Fletcher to place a memorial bench opposite 25, The Front, Middleton One Row to commemorate her grandmother who lived in the property for 60 years and who had sadly passed away on Christmas Eve. A photograph showing the location of the bench was circulated to the Parish Council.

The Parish Council **agreed** to the request for a memorial bench to be placed on The Front opposite 25, The Front, Middleton One Row and asked if it could be hardwood and similar to the other benches on The Front.

Chairman's Signature..... Date.....

133. Water Park

The Chairman stated that the following issues had been discussed and agreed at the Water Park and Ground Maintenance Committee on the 21st December, 2017:

a. Fishing

The Committee had met on the 21st December, 2016. The meeting agreed that fishing by the proposed angling club could not take place in pond 3 because of the prohibitive cost of providing a fence which would also cut off access to the path for walkers.

b. Maintenance

Councillor M. Robertson will be arranging for two benches to be refurbished. Two styles to the adjacent field from the Water Park needed repairing. The Clerk was asked to give Councillor Robertson the name of the Rights of Way Officer of Darlington Borough Council to enable him to determine the owner of the land adjacent to the Water Park to ask for repairs to the styles to be carried out.

c. Meeting with Durham Wildlife Trust

The meeting had taken place on the 9th January, 2017 but was not productive. The officer suggested that trees be cut back near the ponds to make a nature reserve to allow flora and fauna to develop. Funding for any projects would be subject to the Parish Council making a 10% contribution. If a project was to be developed, there would be a need for discussions to take place with Darlington Borough Council to see if any Section 106 money can be allocated to the project.

d. Flyboarding Proposal

The Committee considered the proposal for flyboarding but recommended that the request be turned down.

e. Darlington and District Model Boat Club

A new security door was to be fitted to the building. A request was made from the club to install a concrete bench seat in front of pond 1. The electricity meter in the Boat Club building will be read quarterly and bills submitted to the Boat Club.

f. Pond levels and seepage from the ponds

The Committee received reports that the water level in pond 2 was particularly high and needed addressing. It was also reported that seepage from pond 2 was occurring through the banking.

g. Safety survey of the three ponds

The Committee agreed that a safety survey of the three ponds be carried out. Health and Safety Executive guidance on Safety on Inland Water Sites stated that sites which are similar to the ponds must be inspected every 10 years. The Chairman reported that he had asked Northumbrian Water and the Environment Agency

Chairman's Signature..... Date.....

if they would carry out the inspection but both bodies declined. Councillor Mrs. Beadle reported that the ponds had recently been inspected by RoSPA and circulated the report to the Parish Council.

It was **agreed** that consideration be given to the RoSPA report and the further action which would be needed as a result of the Health and Safety guidance on Safety on Inland Water Sites. The RoSPA report will be circulated to all Parish Councillors.

h. Grounds Maintenance

The Chairman expressed concern that end of season tidying up work had not been carried out and he had produced a work schedule for grounds maintenance for each month. The contractor would be asked to inform the Clerk when he had completed the monthly work and it would be checked. The work schedule was circulated to Parish Councillors and comments had been included in the final schedule which had been sent to the grounds maintenance contractor. He had asked the contractor for a meeting to discuss the work schedule.

i. Future use of the Water Park

The Chairman reported that he had been approached by two people representing fishing clubs asking to use the Water Park. Preliminary contact had been made and a meeting will be arranged with them to explore their proposals. The question of whether fishing should be reintroduced to put forward. Following a discussion, the Parish Council voted 7 in favour of the return of fishing to the Water Park and 3 Abstentions.

The Clerk was asked to send the Chairman the agreement with Ferryhill Angling Club to be amended and sent to interested angling clubs. It was pointed out that the paths and outer banks are the responsibility of the Parish Council but the ponds and the inner banks were the responsibility of the hirer.

j. Blocked Culverts

The Chairman reported that the culvert in front of the Parish Hall and three culverts near the Model Boat Club building were blocked. The Clerk stated that he had written to Streetscene for a price for the work but had not received a reply. The Parish Council suggested that Dyno Rod and Bee Clear be approached for prices for clearing the culverts.

k. Membership of the Water Park and Ground Maintenance Committee

Councillor Mrs. Gilsean reported that the Community Centre representative on the Committee will be Melissa Lane and Chrissie Thornley.

The Parish Council agreed that:

- i. Fishing be reintroduced in ponds 2 and 3 in the Water Park at a charge of around £1,000 per year.
- ii. The request to use the Water Park for the flyboarding activity be turned down. The Chairman to inform the club concerned.

Chairman's Signature..... Date.....

- iii. The meter in the Model Boat Club building be read quarterly and the rent paid by the Model Boat Club remain the same.
- iv. The Clerk approach Dyno Rod and Bee Clear for prices for clearing the blocked culverts in the Water Park.

134. Planning Matters

Councillor Mrs. Gilsenan reported that a meeting of the Planning Committee was held on the 11th January, 2017 and gave the issues which had been discussed and agreed at the meeting,

a. Possible Plans for a New Church Centre

There was nothing further to report. The Parochial Church Council was in discussions with the Diocese. The Clerk will be visiting the Durham Records Office to obtain the deed for the land in the Water Park.

b. Integration Letter

The Chairman reported that the integration letter had been sent to the Principal Planning Officer of Darlington Borough Council and he had received his reply and the reply from the Chief Executive. The reply from the Principal Planning Officer had been put on the website and was positive. The Parish Council was asking Darlington Borough Council where Section 106 money for developments in Middleton St. George had gone.

In view of recent information to the effect that Neighbourhood Plans may not need to wait for updated Local Plans in order to progress, the Planning Committee will be starting to review the MSG Neighbourhood Plan and discuss whether/how to proceed. If it is recommended, the Parish Council and the public would need to be involved, and all statutory procedure would be followed.

c. GP Surgery

Mrs. Stewart, the Practice Manager of Felix House Surgery attended the Planning Committee meeting and explained that the move to Middleton Hall Retirement Village was a temporary arrangement. Felix House was owned by one of the doctors who had retired and had plans for the building. The NHS and the practice was looking for a site to located the surgery in Middleton St. George.

Mrs Stewart and the Planning Committee agreed to keep in touch as things progressed, especially with regard to addressing concerns of residents.

d. Tees Valley Strategic Transport Plan

Councillor Mrs. Gilsenan circulated the draft response to the Strategic Transport Plan.

The Parish Council agreed that the submission which had been drafted by Councillor Mrs. Gilsenan be sent to Tees Valley Unlimited.

e. Planning Applications Received

Chairman’s Signature..... Date.....

The following planning applications had been received and the decisions taken by the Committee.

i. 16/01047/FUL. Proposed inert waste recycling facility, associated buildings and car parking enclosed by 2.4 m high palisade fencing (additional information, Odour Management Plan and Noise Management Plan received 15th December, 2016) at the Powerhouse, Durham Tees Valley Airport, Middleton St. George.

The Committee **agreed** to reiterate its previous objections, on their own merits, based on the grounds of noise and dust from the proposed operation, as well as from the lorries gaining access along a residential area, and as such the Committee would support the stringent conditions set down by the Environmental Health Officer. The Committee also supports the objections raised by CPRE.

ii. 16/01247/FUL. Conversion of integral garages into habitable rooms and associated alterations and erection of a detached triple garage with loft/storage space above and external staircase, at 51B, Middleton Lane, Middleton St. George.

The Committee **agreed** that no comment be made on this application.

iii. 16/01146/FUL. Erection of first floor to existing garage to be used as studio/storage area at 5, Thorntree Villas, Middleton St. George.

The Committee **agreed** that no comment be made on this application.

iv. 16/01278/FUL. Conversion of part of existing garage into utility room/wc with pitched roof over and single storey extension to the rear at 12 Washington Avenue, Middleton St. George.

The Committee **agreed** that no comment be made on this application.

v. 16/01264/FUL. Erection of single storey extension to west elevation, 1 Church Close, Middleton St. George.

The Committee **agreed** that no comment be made on this application.

f. Planning Application Referred to the Parish Council

The following planning application was considered by the Planning Committee on the 11th January, 2017 but it was considered after the meeting that it should be referred to the Parish Council for further consideration.

16/01256/FUL. Residential development comprising 14 No. dwellings (Revised Scheme), Field to the East of Oak Tree Inn, Yarm Road, Middleton St. George.

The Planning Committee had asked if this development would have affordable housing, and if not, to object and to query the proposal for the drainage system.

Following a discussion, the Parish Council **agreed** that it objects to the development on the grounds of:

- Design and density out of character with previous developments at Oak Tree.
- Lack of affordable housing.

Chairman's Signature..... Date.....

Access hazards.
Lack of accessibility from the proposed development.
The drainage/sewerage system.

144. Financial Matters

Councillor Mrs. Beadle reported that a meeting of the Finance Committee had been held on the 11th January, 2017. Councillor Mrs. Beadle gave details of the Financial Report which had been submitted to the Parish Council meeting.

a. Financial Statement, Progress against the Budget and Bank Reconciliation

i. Financial Statement

The Financial Statement gave the income, expenditure and balances in the Parish Council’s accounts as at the 31st December, 2016 and 10th January, 2017 were:

Barclays Saver Account 1 as at 31st December, 2016: £21,313.18.

Barclays Saver Account 2 as at 31st December, 2016: £16,269.78

Darlington Credit Union Account as at 31st December, 2016: £5,018.66

Barclaycard: £500 limit minus £416.64 authorised expenditure at the Parish Council meeting.

Community Account as at 10th January, 2017: £38,067.26.

ii. Progress against the budget

The Progress against the Budget Statement as at the 10th January, 2017, 2016 showed that the projected carry forward from the 2016-17 financial year to the 2017-18 financial year will be £29,034.93.

iii. Bank Reconciliation

The bank reconciliation on the 10th January, 2017 showed that the balance of the Community Account held by the Parish Council was £38,067.26 and the balance of the Community Account at the bank was £38,067.26.

b. Payments Received and Outstanding

A payment of £79.63 from Southern Electric for the overpayment of electricity had been paid into the bank account.

The following payments were outstanding:

| Date | Supplier | Amount |
|----------|--|-----------|
| 29.11.16 | Elveden Estates – Supply of 24ft Spruce Tree | £1,158.00 |

Chairman’s Signature..... Date.....

| | | |
|----------|---|---------|
| 31.01.17 | HM Revenue and Customs – Clerk’s PAYE November 2016 to January 2017 | £419.40 |
|----------|---|---------|

c. Payments for Approval

The following payments were approved:

| Date | Supplier | Amount |
|-------------|---|------------------|
| 07.01.16 | HM Revenue and Customs – Clerk’s PAYE August to October 2016 | £419.40 |
| 12.01.17 | Scottish Power – Gas monthly payment | £12.00 |
| 12.01.17 | St. Teresa’s Hospice – Contribution towards the Christmas Tree Collection | £100.00 |
| 16.01.17 | Elveden Estates – Supply of 24ft Spruce Tree | £1,158.00 |
| 16.01.17 | Barclaycard Payments – See Financial Statement 1.4 for details | £416.64 |
| 23.12.17 | BT Hub monthly payment | £35.89 |
| 31.01.17 | J. D. Lynn – Litter Picker | £489.60 |
| 31.01.17 | C. I. Wood – Cleaner | £70.00 |
| 31.01.17 | A. W. Macnab - Clerk | £559.80 |
| 31.01.17 | M. Palfreman – Grounds Maintenance | £653.00 |
| 31.01.17 | HM Revenue and Customs - PAYE | £419.40 |
| | | |
| | Total | £4,333.73 |

d. Breakdown of income in the Financial Statements and Ring Fencing of Savings Accounts 1 and 2.

The Finance Committee at its meeting on the 9th January, 2017 had agreed that:

- i. When the Clerk presents the financial statement to meetings it shows separate headings for Income, Balance carried forward and grants and other sources.
- ii. The Parish Council be asked to approve Saver Account 1 as the Ring Fenced Account for the Water Park and The Front with £20,000 ring fenced for the Water Park and £6, 000 for The Front. Saver Account 2 to hold a further £6,000 for the Litter Picker subsidy.

e. Report on Internal Auditor’s half yearly audit.

The internal auditor’s half yearly audit report on the Parish Council’s accounts was circulated to the Parish Council before the meeting.

The recommendations were being implemented. The Chairman reported that he was reviewing the risk assessment to include the recommended actions from the internal auditor’s report.

f. Staff Pensions

The Clerk reported that the Parish Council had complied with the Automatic Enrolment duties of The Pensions Regulator, a suitable pension for the Litter Picker was being sought and the Litter Picker was being asked how much he wished to contribute to his pension. A budget would have to be created for staff pensions.

145. Playground

Chairman’s Signature..... Date.....

Councillor Everett reported on the following playground issues

a. Health and Safety Check

No health and safety issues were reported.

b. Maintenance Issues

The fencing work had been completed and he had given the Clerk the bill for payment for the materials.

c. Dog Fouling and Notices

A price had been obtained for the 6 dog fouling signs similar to the ones in Middlesbrough but the cost was very expensive. Alternative prices for printing the signs would be sought. The Borough Council's Street Scene Team had emptied the dog bin in Neasham Road.

The Parish Council **agreed** that Councillor Everett be responsible for obtaining prices for the dog fouling signs.

146. Community Liaison

The Chairman of the Parish Council reported on the following issues:

a. Website and Facebook

No problems were being experienced with the website apart from the occasional slowness by the company in putting items onto the website.

Councillor Mrs. Gilson had compiled the Facebook report which was as follows for the period from the 1st November, 2016 when it was created:

Total No. "Likes": 104

Between 12/12/2016 and 16/01/2017:

Post reach:

| | | |
|-------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|
| Development Proposals: | 1,000 | (post engagement 276) |
| Christmas Tree Disposal | 1,000 | (post engagement 151) |
| Notices re PC meetings | 430 approx. | (post engagement 60 approx) |
| Bridleway Closure | 837 | (post engagement 214) |

The Parish Council **agreed** to note the report.

147. IT and CCTV

a. CCTV & Security lights - Update.

Chairman's Signature..... Date.....

The Chairman of the Parish Council reported that he was arranging for the company which installed to the CCTV and security lights to visit the offices again to investigate why the CCTV and security lights were tripping the circuit breaker.

b. Projector and External drive for data back up

The projector and external drive for data back up had been purchased. The projector was used at the Planning Committee and data had been backed up using the external drive. The data back up would take place once each month. There was a need for the main picture at the head of the Meeting Room to be taken down to use the wall as a screen.

The Parish Council **agreed** to note the report.

148 Parish Council Offices – Fire Safety

Councillor M. Robertson reported that he was carrying out the fire risk assessment of the offices and a new fire extinguisher and torch to be used if the lighting failed was being purchased.

The Parish Council **agreed** to note the report.

149. Date of next meeting

The Parish Council **agreed** that the next meeting will be held on **Monday 13th February, 2017 at 6.30 p.m. in the Parish Council Meeting Room.**

The meeting ended at 8.30 p.m.

Chairman’s Signature..... Date.....

Chairman's Signature..... Date.....