



Middleton St George Parish Council

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DUE TO THE CORONAVIRUS LOCKDOWN THIS SCHEDULED MEETING COULD NOT TAKE PLACE IN PERSON. A DECISION-MAKING SPREADSHEET WAS SENT BY THE CLERK TO MEMBERS TO ENABLE THEM TO RETURN IT GIVING IF THEY CONSENTED, DISAGREED WITH, NOTED, COMMENTED ON AND PROPOSALS AND INFORMATION LINKED TO THE AGENDA AND PAPERS.

Minutes of the Virtual Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 23rd March, 2020

Present: Councillor Mrs. C. Gilsenan (Chairman),
Councillor S. Crowther (Vice Chairman),
Councillor A. Blacklee,
Councillor H. Bullock,
Councillor L. Foggett,
Councillor S. l'Anson,
Alan Macnab, Clerk.

1308. Apologies for Absence

No apologies for absence were received.

1309. Declarations of Interests

No declaration of interests were made.

1310. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on the 24th February, 2020

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 24th February, 2020 were presented.

Once the Clerk had informed the Chairman that all members had recorded their **approval** of the minutes via the above-mentioned Spreadsheet, the Chairman signed and returned the minutes to the Clerk

1311. Section 137 Request for Funding for the VE Day Commemorations

The Clerk reported that the organisers of the VE Day Commemorations had originally requested a contribution of £470 from the Parish Council and they provided a breakdown of the costs. The organisers have informed the Parish Council that other organisations are contributing therefore the request for funding will be much less. £100 has been spent on advertising the event and the organisers asked the Parish Council to consider contributing £100 to cover the cost of advertising the event.

It was pointed out that the event as planned will not now be held because of the COVID-19 Emergency but the organisers indicated that £100 had been spent on advertising and receipts for spending would be given to the Clerk.

The Parish Council **agreed** that a Section 137 contribution of £100 be made to the Organisers of the VE Day Commemorations for advertising the event.

Chairman's Signature.....

C. Gilsenan

Date.....

11/05/2020

1312. Resignation from the Parish Council and Declaration of a vacancy on the Parish Council

The Clerk reported that Councillor Wilkinson had tendered her resignation from the Parish Council for health reasons and it would be necessary for the Parish Council to formally declare that a vacancy existed.

The Chairman had reported that, with regard to the pending adverts and co-options for the first two vacancies which had resulted from the resignations of Councillors Mrs. Beadle and Smith, the closing date for applications was given as 27th March, for cooption at the meeting of 6th April, and there had been one expression of interest from a resident.

The Parish Council **agreed** to formally declare that a vacancy for a Parish Councillor existed and that the Democratic Services Officer of Darlington Borough Council be informed of the vacancy but the vacancy, along with the vacancy as a result of Councillor McBride's resignation, should not be advertised until the COVID-19 emergency is over.

1313. Coronavirus – Latest Information

The Chairman reported that Parish Councillors were being kept up to date with the information and advice from CDALC/NALC on how it should proceed with meetings, decision-making and dealing with council matters.

1313.1 Holding Local Council Meetings

NALC strongly encouraged councillors and staff to follow government guidance on social distancing and self-isolation. If local councils did follow government guidance on social distancing and social isolation and so they do not hold scheduled meetings, including annual council meetings, NALC's opinion is that the likelihood of a successful legal challenge would be low. Government guidance on holding meetings remotely was expected in the next week, and NALC will also produce further guidance accordingly.

In the absence of Government guidance, the NALC indicated that for now local councils should only taking decisions remotely for truly urgent issues. In this case, local councils should evidence their decision-making as best they can, for example by asking councillors to confirm their votes by email to the clerk and for the clerk to keep as a record of the decision.

The Chairman stated that the means of how to do video conferencing (possibly using Zoom) was being investigated and looking into the most appropriate way of prioritising matters and how to deal with them (decision-making, etc.).

1313.2 Actions taken by clubs and societies

The Chairman reported that:

- VE Day committee meetings have been cancelled until further notice.
- The Model Boat Club has suspended all meetings and activities until further notice.
- The PACT meeting scheduled for 6.30pm on Wednesday 25th March at Dinsdale Court has been cancelled.
- The Community Centre Trustees met for the last time on Wednesday 18th until further notice, and following Government advice, has now closed the Community Centre until further notice (though the Nursery, which was operating separately, was still open for the children of keyworkers).

- A community initiative was set up in the village to help the vulnerable (by Darren Leaning, who is an NHS Consultant) via the Facebook Group: MSG COVID-19 Support Group. This group is now actively assisting people. The Community Centre Trustees decided that as the Community Centre was now closed, they

Chairman's Signature..... *C.J. Gibson* Date..... *11/05/2020*

should direct people (both those in need, and those people wishing to help) to Darren and his support group. The Chairman recommended that the Parish Council do this also (and put a link from its Facebook Page).

- Groups using the Parish Council meeting room to be asked not to meet there during this time so that use of room is minimised.
- The Chairman suggested that the Parish Council close the Multi Use Games Area in the Water Park and play area (taping off, putting up notices), as such areas including playgrounds were being closed elsewhere due to the increased risk posed by children and young people gathering.

The Parish Council agreed that:

- a. It take the same actions as the Community Centre to direct people in need and people who wish to help to the Support Group and a link be put from its Facebook page.
- b. Groups who normally use the Parish Council Meeting Room be advised not to use the room because of the current emergency.
- c. The Multi Use Games Area and play area be closed and secured as suggested by the Chairman.
- d. The Water Park be closed to unauthorized vehicles to help maintain social distancing, especially given that the Angling Club and Boating Club activities had ceased, and that the Community Centre was closed.

1313.3 Staff Welfare

The Chairman reported that the Clerk had enquired if the Litter Picker should or should not continue working. Information from the Head of Streetscene at Darlington Borough Council was that all Borough Council employed Litter Pickers were working normally but if they had symptoms they must self-isolate. The Litter Picker's father informed the Clerk that he (Litter Picker) does not have any pre-existing medical conditions. The Clerk asked him to work normally until things changed. The Cleaner will also work normally again until things change.

The Chairman also reported that the Parish Council should advise the Clerk to work from home as much as possible so as to minimise opening the Parish Council Room, and the Cleaner is sent Government Updates regarding the cleaning measures.

The Parish Council agreed that the Clerk will work from home and the work situation of the Litter Picker and Cleaner be monitored by the Clerk.

Planning Matters

1314. Pending Applications Applications for sites allocated in the DBC Draft Local Plan

The Chairman reported that there was no further information on the following applications.

16/00976/OUT - Up to 260 dwellings, Station Road, Middleton St. George (site 099 on Draft Local Plan Policies Map)

19/00231/OUT – 160 houses, land behind The Greenway, Middleton St. George (site 375 on Draft Local Plan Policies Map)

1315. Developments under Construction

Chairman's Signature..... *C. J. Wilson* Date..... *11/05/2020*

The Chairman reported that there was nothing to report on the site on land to the rear of High Stell, Middleton St. George and other sites in the village. Although there was a bottleneck reported on a village Facebook group recently regarding a huge truck at the entrance to The Greenway.

1316. Parking and Road Safety in Middleton St George

The Clerk reported that no further response was received from the Highways Officer.

1317. Planning Decisions

It was reported that planning permission had been granted for following planning applications.

19/01139/FUL. Demolition of existing garage and erection of single storey extension to side with new entrance with pitch roof canopy, replacement of 2 No. bow windows with bay windows to front elevation, replacement of existing entrance door with window at ground floor level, boundary walls to rear and improvement of external steps and patio area and demolition of existing two storey rear extension and replace with enlarged two storey flat roof extension (resubmission) (as amended by plans 30/01/20). 20, The Front, Middleton One Row.

20/00004/FUL. Erection of first floor rear and side extension (as amended by plans received 28th February 2020), 12 The Greenway, Middleton St George.

20/00024/FUL. Erection of 2 no. industrial units with associated parking and hard standing. Tower House, Teesside Airport.

1318. New Planning Applications

The following planning applications were submitted for consideration by the Parish Council.

20/00120/CON - Field At OSGR E435292 N513607 Yarm Road Oak Tree Middleton St. George. Approval of details reserved by condition 24 (Archaeology) attached to planning permission 17/01175/FUL dated 29 May 2019 (residential housing development consisting of 61 No dwellings together with car parking, landscaping and associated infrastructure) Ref. No: 20/00120/CON.

The Parish Council **agreed** to make no comment on this planning application.

20/00121/FUL - Field at OSGR E435292 N513607 Yarm Road Oak Tree Middleton St. George. Application submitted under Section 73 of the Town and Country Act 1990 for the variation of condition 3 (external materials), 7 (landscaping), 12(gateway/footpath), 14 (FRA), 17 (noise barriers), 27 (surface water) and removal of condition 19, 20 (Phase2 land contamination), 29 (ARMCO), 31 (landscaping) attached to planning permission 17/01175/FUL dated 29 May 2019 to permit changes as per submitted schedule. Ref. No: 20/00121/FUL.

The Parish Council **agreed** to inform Darlington Borough Council that it strongly objects to the removal of the requirement to submit information prior to the commencement of development for the following: conditions:

- a. Condition 3 (External Materials).
- b. Condition 7 (Landscaping).
- c. Condition 12 (Gateway/Footpath).
- d. Condition 14 (Flood Risk Assessment).
- e. Condition 17 (Noise Barriers).
- f. Condition 19 (Phase 2 Land Contamination).

Chairman's Signature..... *C. J. Gibson* Date..... *11/05/2020*

g. Condition 9 (Construction Management Plan).

1319. Middleton St. George Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP)

The Chairman reported that the Draft Design Code had been received from AECOM and had been circulated to the Parish Council with the papers for the Virtual Meeting for their comments. The Parish Council also received the NDP Funding Report and an invoice from Jo-Anne Garrick Limited for £1,320 for her work to prepare the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

The Parish Council agreed:

- a. To note the Chairman's report and the NDP Funding Report.
- b. To forward any comments on the Draft Design Code to AECOM
- c. To pay the invoice for £1,320 from Jo-Anne Garrick Limited.

1320. Stockton and Darlington Railway – Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) and Community Engagement

The Chairman reported on the Middleton St. George Stockton and Darlington Railway Heritage Steering/ Working Group meeting on the 13th March, 2020. The Chairman gave an update on the Asset of Community Value application which had been submitted to Darlington Borough Council.

The Statement of Significance on the Platform 1 public house and land to the rear had been drafted and was awaiting being signed off by the Parish Council.

The Heritage Lottery Fund application for Waiting Shed Wall was being drafted.

The 195th S&D Railway Anniversary Celebrations in Stockton Saturday 26th September 2020.

Sleeper blocks had been discovered in the Whinnies and discussions were being held with Darlington Borough Council on how they can be safely removed and stored for the future.

The provisional next meeting date was the 29th April, 2020.

The Parish Council agreed to formally approve the Statement of Significance on Platform 1 and its land. The Statement of Significance will be owned by the Parish Council and it will remain on file to be used in the event of Platform 1 being subject to a planning application.

1321. Darlington Local Plan

The Parish Council received in the papers for the Virtual Meeting an email from Darlington Borough Council indicating that the Draft Local Plan had been approved by the Council and would now be subject to a six week public consultation starting in late April 2020.

The Parish Council agreed to note the report.

1322. Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) Meetings

The Chairman reported that all "in person" CPRE meetings had been cancelled because of the Coronavirus emergency, but it was hoped to deal with business via email consultation instead.

1323. Section 106. Meeting between the Head of Planning and Parish Councillors – Update

Chairman's Signature..... *C.J. Gibson* Date..... *11/05/2020*

It was reported that a meeting with the Head of Planning had been arranged but that it was postponed until the end of the Coronavirus emergency.

1324. Proposed Sculpture at Middleton One Row

The Chairman reported that no further information had been received.

1325. Work on the trees on Parish Council land to the rear of 38, The Front, Middleton One Row

The Clerk reported that a tree report from E & M Leighton had been received and a planning application was being drafted.

1326. Woodland Management Project, The Front, Middleton One Row

The Chairman reported that no further information had been received from Groundwork on progress with the project.

1327. Consultation on County Durham and Darlington Road Safety Strategy

The Parish Council received, in the papers for the virtual meeting, the consultation document on the County Durham and Darlington Road Safety Strategy. The consultation period will end on the 29th March, 2020.

The Chairman recommended that comments be made on the following paragraphs in the strategy document:

- 4.4 Engineering.
- 4.6 and 4.7 Evaluation.
- 5.11 Partnerships.

The Chairman was the only Councillor who responded, and these comments were then forwarded to County Durham and Darlington Road Safety Strategy Team.

1328. Review of Parish Council Printers

Councillor Bullock reported that she had completed the clear out of cupboards in the Parish Council Meeting Room and removed the Epson Printer (black) which the Clerk stated did not work and was not used. Therefore, it has been disposed of.

The Parish Council **agreed** to the Chairman's recommendation that the Clerk draft a report on the issues with the current printers so that the Parish Council can decide in due course what to do with them.

1329. Councillors' reports and items for future agendas

1329.1 Middleton St. George in Bloom 2020

Councillor Bullock reported that MSG in Bloom Spring Judging has been cancelled. Northumbria in Bloom was considering the decision about Summer Judging.

1329.2 Issues Arising

The Chairman proposed that that that The Parish Council looks into any priority issues during the current situation, and leave less urgent matters until after the emergency was over.

The Chairman's proposal was **agreed** by the Parish Council.

1330. Dates of next meetings

Chairman's Signature.....*C. J. Bullock*..... Date.....*11/05/2020*.....

Monday 6th April 2020 (mainly finance) at 6.30 p.m.

Monday 20th April 2020 (mainly planning) at 6.30 p.m.

The Chairman proposed that when the Parish Council was advised to proceed regarding making collective decisions (either via email or by video conferencing the meetings could still theoretically be held as scheduled, and the recommended procedures used accordingly. Urgent and priority matters should be given priority by the Parish Council and then how best to address other matters be considered.

The Chairman's proposal was **agreed** by the Parish Council.

Chairman's Signature..... *C.J. Gibson* Date..... *11/05/2020*