



Middleton St George Parish Council

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DRAFT

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 10th April, 2017 in the Parish Council Meeting Room

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

In attendance: Mr. D. Glew, Middleton St. George Cricket Club for Minute No. 189.

The meeting started at 6.30 p.m.

184. Chairman's Opening Address

The Chairman had no matters to report under his opening address.

185. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S. Crowther and M. Wilson.

186. Declarations of Interests

No declarations of interests were made.

187. Minutes of the last Parish Council meeting held on the 13th March, 2017

The minutes of the last meeting held on the 13th March, 2017 were presented. The Parish Council **agreed** that they were a true record of the proceedings. The Chairman signed the minutes.

188. Matters Arising

a. Staff Pensions

The Clerk reported that the Litter Picker had been informed that the Parish Council would contribute 2%

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towards his pension. He was discussing with the Citizens Advice Bureau the mechanism for setting up the pension with NEST and it was hoped that this would be completed by the 1st May, 2017.

The Parish Council asked the Clerk to ensure that all measures were in place for the Litter Picker to make contributions to his pension scheme by the 1st May, 2017.

b. Insurance Claim

The Chairman reported that the Parish Council’s insurers, Zurich, had been informed that it agreed to the terms of the settlement with the claimant. The Chairman asked if a request had been made from Zurich for the Parish Council to pay the £100 excess as part of the agreement. The Clerk confirmed that a request had not been made.

c. Village Emblem

The Chairman reported that he had discussed the design of a Village Emblem with the Middleton St. George History Club who were supportive and made some suggestions. He had also approached the head of St George’s Academy with a view to holding a design competition of the children. The proposal was well received and would go ahead.

The Parish Council **agreed** that three prizes of £15 per category for the best design in Key Stages 1, Lower Key Stage 2 and Upper Key Stage 2 would be awarded. An overall winner would be selected from the best designs in the three Key Stages.

d. Village Flag

The Clerk reported that he had asked a flag maker for a catalogue showing the various sizes of the Union Flag in relation to sizes of flag poles. The catalogue had not been received and he had sent a reminder

The Parish Council **agreed** that the current flag be replaced with a new Union Flag of the same size.

e. Possible Membership of the County Durham Association of Local Councils

The Clerk reported that he had received a reply from County Durham Association of Local Councils giving the membership fees for joining the Association.

The membership fees were based on the number of electors in the Parish which at the last Parish Council elections in 2016 was 3,461. The membership fee to the Association was 10p per elector and a further 6.73p per elector for membership of the National Association of Local Councils. The combined membership fee was £579.03.

The Parish Council **agreed** that the Parish Council will be a member of the County Durham Association of Local Councils as well as the National Association of Local Councils and to pay the membership fee for 2017-18 of £579.03.

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f. Northumbria in Bloom

The Chairman reported that he was discussing with the village organiser of the Northumbria in Bloom entry if she needed any help with the displays in the village.

g. Sign on entrance gate to the Water Park

The chairman reported that a resident had expressed concern about the sign on the entrance gate to the Water Park which stated that the gates would be locked at 8 p.m. each evening.

The Parish Council **agreed** that the sign at the entrance gate to the Water Park be removed.

189. Request for Financial Assistance from Middleton St. George Cricket Club

The Chairman reported that a request had been received from Middleton St. George Cricket Club for financial assistance towards replacing the roof and internal redecoration of its pavilion which had been extensively damaged in a recent storm. Mr. D. Glew from the Cricket Club was present at the meeting.

The Parish Council examined the Cricket Club’s bank statement and estimates which had been received for replacing the roof and internal redecorating the building. Mr. Glew gave details of the number of registered players and teams and the grants which had been sought, received and were awaited for the work.

Following a discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Mrs. Greenwell and seconded by Councillor Mrs. E. Robertson that the Parish Council donate £1,500 to Middleton St. George Cricket Club to help with the refurbishment of their cricket building. A vote was taken. The Parish Council unanimously **agreed** to a Section 137 donation of £1,500 to Middleton St. George Cricket Club.

190. Water Park

The Chairman reported on the following matters:

a. Fishing Club Update

No problems were being experienced by the Club using pond 3 for fishing.

b. Model Boat Club

The three year lease has now been signed by the Parish Council and the Model Boat Club.

c. Blocked Culverts

The three culverts along the water park access road to the Model Boat Club building had been dug up, the root damage had been cleared and replaced with plastic gullies.

d. Ground Maintenance

An email had been sent to the Parish Council’s grounds maintenance contractor on the 3rd April, 2017 expressing

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concern that invoices were not being submitted to support the Standing Order payments to the grounds maintenance contractor and the invoices submitted were vague and did not support the work which was actually carried out in that month. The contractor was asked to submit invoices for the work actually carried out and once the work carried out was confirmed payment would be made. There had not been a reply received from the grounds maintenance contractor.

Following a discussion, the Parish Council **agreed** to cancel the Standing Order payments to the grounds maintenance contractor until invoices had been received.

e. Damage to fencing in the MUGA

A fence panel in the MUGA had been damaged. A contractor had visited the site and had advised that a new section of the fence was needed.

The Parish Council **agreed** that the Chairman would look into repair options.

f. Water Park Maintenance and Improvements

Three quotations had been received for improvement work to the Water Park to create a car park at the front of the Parish Council offices, the Model Boat Club building and fishing car parks, the ramp and footpaths. The quotations had been circulated to Parish Councillors before the meeting.

Following a discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Everett and seconded by Councillor Mrs. Robertson and the Parish Council **agreed** that:

The first priority will be the creation of a small car park at the front of the Parish Council offices and the quotation from I. R. Hindle of £2,380 for this work be accepted.

The quotation of £9,840 for the remaining work from M. Spence Resurfacing be accepted.

191. Planning

Councillor Mrs. Gilsenan reported that a meeting of the Planning Committee was held on the 5th April, 2017 and gave the issues which had been considered and the decisions taken at the meeting.

a. Planning Applications Received

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

17/00207/TF. Works to trees protected under Tree Preservation Order (No.14) 2007 – Fell 1 No. Pine Tree (T2), Removal of deadwood to 1 No. Pine Tree (T1) and Crown lift and remove major deadwood over Church Lane and modify crown over garden to 1 No. Oak (T3). 10, Church Close, Middleton St. George.

17/00228/FUL. Erection of two store extension to the rear. 12, Ropner Gardens, Middleton St. George.

The Committee decided that no comments be made on both applications.

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b. 350 houses and District Centre at Durham Tees Valley Airport

Councillors Mrs. Gilsenan and Mrs. Greenwell and Alan Macnab Parish Clerk, and Ward Councillor Doris Jones attended the Borough Council’s Planning Applications Committee on the 5th April, 2017 which had considered the planning application.

Councillor Mrs. Gilsenan had spoken on behalf of the Parish Council, having consulted with the other Councillors beforehand. Ward Councillor Doris Jones and Gerry Stapleton from the SAVE Teesside Airport Campaign attended and addressed the Committee.

The application was granted planning permission despite strong grounds for opposition being presented, and a supported proposal from DBC Planning Committee for a deferral due to lack of detailed information on pupil figures and financial information demonstrating how Peel would invest the capital to ensure the viability of the airport. The application was approved on the casting vote of the Chair of the Planning Applications Committee.

There has been requests for the application be “Called In”, and have urged the Parish Council to do the same. However, the Secretary of State rarely calls in applications, and there seems to only be one of the criteria which might apply (that the application could have significant effects beyond the immediate locality). This would likely be in regard to the impact of the housing on the future viability of the airport. The Planning Committee felt that, as requests had already been made on these grounds, and as this was not strictly an issue affecting the village itself, there was little point in writing to the Secretary of State.

The Parish Council **agreed** that it should not initiate a call in to the Secretary of State on this planning application.

c. Middleton St. George Planning Workshop Report

The workshop was attended by the Chairman, Councillors Mrs. Gilsenan and Mrs. Beadle and Alan Macnab, Parish Clerk and Ward Councillors Doris and Brian Jones. The Borough Council’s Acting Place Strategy Manager, hosted the workshop. The Workshop was also attended by Developers, Planning Officers, the School Places Adviser and representatives from the Homes and Communities ATLAS Team.

A report and feedback was awaited from Darlington Borough Council. The Parish Council will then examine carefully whether proposals were feasible and the residents would be consulted.

d. Possible Plans for new Church Centre

The PCC Secretary/Church Administrator and Church Warden attended the Planning Committee and gave an update. The PCC had met to discuss progress, and had asked the Secretary/Church Administrator to meet with its architect. The architect was putting together a proposal which would be presented at the PCC meeting on the 25th May 2017.

The PCC asked the Parish Council for a legal document regarding the terms of the lease (possibly 125 years). The Clerk will contact the Assistant Director, Law and Governance at Darlington Borough Council to ask how the Parish Council should proceed legally. Car parking spaces were discussed, and it was agreed that only a few car parking spaces would be needed for the Parish Council and the Church Centre.

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The Clerk reported that he had written to the Assistant Director, Law and Governance at Darlington Borough Council who had replied that discussions with colleagues on the level of support cannot be held until after Easter because of annual leave commitments. However, the response did state that at the moment the Council has limited capacity to deal with the matter. The Clerk stated that he had written to the Legal Officer of the NALC to ask for guidance on how to proceed and would also be contacting the District Valuation Service.

e. Housing White Paper

The draft response to the Housing White Paper which had been prepared by Councillor Mrs. Gilson had been circulated to Parish Councillors before the meeting.

The Parish Council **agreed** that the response be sent to the Department for Communities and Local Government.

192. Financial Matters

The Chairman of the Parish Council reported that a meeting of the Finance Committee had been held on the 3rd April, 2017 and he gave details of the issues discussed.

a. Financial Statement, Progress against the Budget and Bank Reconciliation for the 2016-17 Financial Year

i. Financial Statement

The Financial Statement gave the income, expenditure and balances in the Parish Council’s accounts as at the 31st March, 2017. The financial year end balances were:

Contingency Barclays Saver Account 1: £21,313.08.

Contingency Barclays Saver Account 2: £16,269.78

Reserves Darlington Credit Union Account: £5,068.78

Barclaycard: £500 limit.

Expenditure – February 2017

Date	Customer and Reason	Amount
01.02.17	Durham County Council Records Office Photocopying	£4.00

Expenditure – March 2017

Date	Customer	Amount
06.03.17	Amazon. 200 Heavy Duty Wheelie Bin Bags	42.20
10.03.17	Wilkinsons Darlington. 2 packs File Dividers and 2 lever arch files	3.20
14.03.17	W.H. Smith, Darlington. Condolence Card	1.99
	Total	£47.39

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Community Account as at the 31st March, 2017: £36,424.91 which will be transferred to the 2017-18 financial year.

ii. Progress against the budget

The progress against the budget statement showed that:

The budgeted income at the beginning of the financial year was £110,381.95. The actual income at the end of the financial year on the 31st March, 2017 was £114,764.95.

The budgeted expenditure at the beginning of the financial year was £93,470.40. The actual expenditure at the end of the financial year on the 31st March, 2017 was £78,340.03.

Overall spending was under-budget and the balance to be transferred to the 2017-18 financial year was £36,424.91.

iii. Bank Reconciliation

The bank reconciliation on the 31st March, 2017 showed that the balance of the Community Account held by the Parish Council was £36,424.91 and the balance of the Community Account at the bank was £36,524.91. A difference of £100. This was due to one cheque for £100 not being cleared by the bank.

b. Payments Received and Outstanding

Payments Received:

2016-17

Date	Customer	Amount
17.03.17	VAT Reimbursement October to December 2016	£576.08
27.03.17	Darlington Borough Council Contribution to Litter Picker April to September, 2017	£2,800.00

2017-18

Date	Customer	Amount
	NIL	

Payments Outstanding

2016-17 and 2017-18

Date	Supplier	Amount
	NIL	

Payments for Approval:

Date	Supplier	Amount
05.04.17	Dave Petty. External Decorating of the Parish Offices	£700.00
10.04.17	Tees Rivers Trust – Giant Hogweed Spraying	£200.00

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10.04.17	Middleton St. George Cricket Club Section 137 Donation.	£1,500.00
13.04.17	Scottish Power Gas Monthly	£32.00
18.04.17	Barclaycard Payment	£47.39
23.04.17	BT Hub Monthly	£35.89
30.04.17	Cleaner – C.I. Wood	£70.00
30.04.17	Litter Picker – J. D. Lynn	£510.00
30.04.17	Clerk – A. W. Macnab	£559.80
	Total	£3,655.08

c. Annual Statutory Return and Internal Auditor’s audit of accounts

The timetable for the Annual Statutory Return had been circulated to Parish Councillors with the papers for the meeting.

The Clerk reported that the accounts, draft Accounting Statement, calculations for the Accounting Statement, bank reconciliation and explanation of the differences between the 2015-16 and 2016-17 Accounting Statements had been completed for the internal audit and the invoices and bank statements files gave all the transactions in the 2016-17 financial year.

193. Playground

Councillor Everett reported on the following matters in relation to the playground.

a. Health and Safety Check

The Clerk reported that he had carried out the weekly health and safety check of the playground and playing field in March and on the 3rd and 10th April, 2017. There were no outstanding issues and the report forms had been passed to Councillor Crowther on the 10th April.

b. RoSPA Annual Inspection

The RoSPA annual inspection of the playground equipment will take place during the week commencing the 8th May, 2017.

c. Maintenance Issues

Complaints had been received from residents about litter, bad language and broken glass on the playing field which had been addressed. There were also reports of quad bikers using the playing field which had been reported to the police.

The cost of 5 a side goal posts had been priced. The prices varied from £200 to £1,000.

The Parish Council discussed taking down the goal posts now the football season was coming to a close, reseeding the goal areas and where the posts could be stored.

The issue of the removal of the bollards to the play area to allow the ground maintenance contractor to gain entry to the playing field was considered.

Following a discussion, the Parish Council **agreed** that:

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- a. Councillor Everett will ask Parish Councillors for their views on the most appropriate 5 a side goal posts to purchase.
- b. Further consideration be given to the storage of the goal posts.
- c. Priority be given to the removal of the goal posts and then the removal of the bollards.

194. Standards

Councillor Mrs. Gilson reported that the Communications and the Health and Safety Policies had been completed and needed to be examined by the Standards Committee. The Freedom of Information Policy and the Important Documents List were being completed.

195. Parish Council Maintenance

The Chairman reported that the outside painting of the Parish Council office building has now been completed and the interior now needed to be decorated on a self-help basis.

196. Projects

The Chairman asked Parish Councillors for their suggestions for projects which could be funded by the Parish Council and possible Section 106 money.

Councillor Mrs. Beadle asked reported that an examination of the trees on The Front was needed. The Clerk stated that he had asked the Borough Council’s Senior Arboriculturalist to report on the trees on The Front. The price for carrying out this work had not yet been received

The provision and the location of the Christmas Tree was discussed. It was suggested that a Christmas Tree be bought and permanently planted rather than just located for the festive period. This would significantly reduce costs and the logistics of fitting. It was proposed that it could be located in front of the Community Centre with a smaller tree in Mount Pleasant Close.

The Committee **agreed** that the Clerk will contact the Borough Council’s Senior Arboriculturalist to ask for prices for surveying the trees on The Front and contact Elm Ridge Nursery for the cost of a 15ft Norwegian Spruce Christmas Tree.

197. Litter Pick

A resident suggested to the Parish Council that a litter pick be carried out every month. It was considered but argued that the frequency was too high and such events be arranged on an as required basis. The litter picks which the Parish Council have organised normally took place on Saturdays when more residents were potentially available but also depended on the weather.

Following a discussion, the Parish Council **agreed** that they would respond where areas required attention and continue to support resident planned activities.

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198. PCSO John Angus Retirement

The Chairman informed the Parish Council that PCSO John Angus had retired after serving the village well over a number of years. It was proposed that the Parish Council should consider marking his retirement and his service with a gift.

Following a discussion, the Parish Council **agreed** that the chairman would purchase a gift up to the value of £100 for presentation to PCSO John Angus.

199. Date of Next Meetings

The Parish Council **agreed** that the next meetings of the Parish Council will be as follows:

- Monday 15th May, 2017 at 6.30 p.m. Ordinary Meeting
- Monday 22nd May, 2017 at 6.30 p.m. Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.

The meeting ended at 8.40 p.m.

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