



Middleton St George Parish Council

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Minutes agreed and approved by the Parish Council on 6th April 2020 at a meeting conducted via virtual means and e email due to the COVID-19 emergency measures.

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 9th March, 2020 in the Parish Council Meeting Room

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

No members of the public were in attendance.

The meeting started at 6.30 p.m.

1275. Chairman's Opening Address

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1276. Public Participation Session

The Clerk reported that no requests had been received for members of the public to address the Parish Council.

1277. Apologies for Absence

No apologies for absence were received.

1278. Declarations of Interests

No declarations of interests were made.

1279. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on the 10th February, 2020

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 10th February, 2020 were presented.

The Parish Council **agreed** that the minutes were a true record of the proceedings subject to the following amendments to Minute No. 1244 Community Projects:

Lines 3 and 4. To read "A site meeting in the MUGA was arranged for the 25th February", and "but the Chairman could not attend" be deleted.

Agreement by the Parish Council that sub point c. be amended to read "A site meeting for the MUGA be arranged and the meeting be attended by the Chairman and Councillor Bullock."

Chairman's Signature..... *C. J. Gilsenan* Date..... *06/04/2020*

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The Chairman signed the minutes at the end of the meeting.

1280. Resignation from the Parish Council and Declaration of a vacancy on the Parish Council

The Clerk reported that Councillor McBride had tendered his resignation from the Parish Council for health reasons.

The Parish Council **agreed** to formally declare that a vacancy for a Parish Councillor existed and asked the Clerk to notify the Democratic Services Officer at Darlington Borough Council of the vacancy for a notice to be drawn up and posted for the statutory period of 14 working days.

1281. Parish Councillor vacancies update

The Clerk reported that the advertisement for two Parish Councillors which had occurred in January 2020 had been posted on the Parish Council's website, Facebook page and the three noticeboards with a closing date of the 27th March. There had been one application but the applicant had to withdraw because of other commitments.

Concern was expressed that the advertisement may not attract people to apply because it specified certain skills and should be reworded to ask "are you interested in becoming a Parish Councillor?"

The Parish Council **agreed** that:

- a. If there was no demand for an election as a result of the vacancy created by the resignation of Councillor McBride the advertisement be delayed until the wording of the advertisement is reconsidered.
- b. A post be added to the PC Website and Facebook Page inviting persons interested to contact any of the Parish Councillors who will be happy to discuss the role with them.

1282. CCTV and Website

1282.1 CCTV

Councillor Foggett reported that the new CCTV system was installed on the 8th March and is working. Access to the system can be obtained from his home. The system makes a recording which is kept for three weeks and is then overwritten.

He also reported that a quotation had been received for an alarm system for the Parish Council building. The existing alarm system had not worked for several years and the code is unknown. The Clerk stated that he was not given the code for the alarm system when he started in August 2016.

Councillor Foggett reported that the sensor which controls the security lights on the Parish Council building was broken and he will ask the security company which installed the CCTV system to repair or replace the sensor and lights. The Parish Council **agreed** to Councillor Bullock's suggestion that the security lights and porch light be on a dusk to dawn timer.

1282.2 Website

Councillor Foggett reported that he was no further forward with the ne website. There had been no response from the former website host for the password for the system. He will ask a website hosting company in Darlington to see if they can help him to get into the system.

Chairman's Signature..... *C.J. Gibson* Date..... *06/04/2020*

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1283. Community Safety

1283.1 Speed Monitor

Councillor Foggett reported that the speed monitor had been loaned to Bishopton Parish Council. Training on its use will be provided by the local PCSO.

The new body cams were being delivered.

1283.2 Community Speed Watch Monitor

Councillor Foggett reported that the speed watch monitor was still in pieces. He had received a quotation of £3,490 + VAT for repairing the monitor. A new monitor with solar panels fitted would cost £1,700. If it was repaired the monitor would have solar panels fitted. Councillor Foggett will ask the Speed Watch Co-ordinator to arrange for the monitor to be repaired.

1283.3 PACT

Councillor Foggett reported that the PACT meeting had been held. It was reported that a vehicle was permanently parked on the footpath in Yarm Road had been reported to the police. The response was that the vehicle was legally parked and it was taxed and insured therefore no action can be taken against the owner.

Financial Matters

1284. Financial Report as at the 3rd March, 2020

The Clerk gave the financial report as at the 3rd March, 2020. The report gave the reasons for the Contingency Accounts and the reserves,

a. Parish Council Accounts

Contingency - Saver Account 1 – Barclays	- £21,439.53
Contingency - Saver Account 2 – Barclays	- £16,366.31
Reserves - Account with Darlington Credit Union	- £5,095.42
Barclaycard Expenditure February 2020	
10.02.2020 Wright's Office Supplies, Darlington.	
1 box of A4 printing paper £11.25, 100 plastic wallets	
£1.69 and 1 Clerk's reporting book £1.59 + VAT	
	- £17.43
Community Account:	
Income	- £135,202.83
Expenditure	- £ 50,505.66
Balance as at the 3rd March, 2020	£ 84,697.17

Chairman's Signature.....

C J Gibson

Date.....

06/04/2020

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b. Progress against the Budget

The anticipated income for the 2019-20 at the end of the financial year was £135,202.83 and the anticipated expenditure was expected to be £54,101.60 with a carry forward surplus balance of £81,101.23 to the 2020-21 financial year.

c. Bank Reconciliation

The bank reconciliation as at the 3rd March, 2020 showed that the Community Account spreadsheet balance held by the Parish Council was £84,697.17 and the Community Account balance held by the bank was £85,887.30. A difference of £1,190.13 which was because cheque numbers 200044 for £4.50, 200046 for £9.99, the bank transfer to NEST Pensions for £39.08 for the February 2020 contributions to the Litter Pickers pension and the bank transfer to NEST Pensions for £1,136.56 which was the arrears for the Litter Picker's pension which had not been cleared by the bank.

The Clerk reported that he had asked the recipient of cheque numbers 200044 and 200046 to present them for payment as soon as possible. The recipient responded that the cheques should be cancelled and this will be carried out.

d. Accounts Spreadsheet and Bank Statement

The Spreadsheet of all the accounts including the transactions in the Community Account and the bank statement for the period from the 1st to the 28th February, 2020 and 1st to the 6th March, 2020 were presented. The bank statement showed the balance in the Community Account at the bank on the 6th March, 2020 was £84,633.50.

1285. Payments received and payments for approval

a. Payment In:

Date	Customer	Amount
11.02.2020	W. Appleton. Angling Club Rent	£1,200.00

b. February 2020 Retrospective Payment:

Date	Supplier	Amount
29.02.2020	NEST Employer's and Employee's Pension Contribution – J. D. Lynn February 2020	£39.08

c. March 2020 Payments

Date	Supplier	Amount
01.03.2020	NEST Employer's and Employee's Pension Contribution – J. D. Lynn. Backdated Employer's and Employee's Contributions August 2016 to December 2019	£1,136.56
04.03.2020	Diamond Drains. Gully Work at the side of the Parish Council building	£350.00
07.03.2020	Scottish Power. Electricity Monthly	£3.00
09.03.2020	Darlington Borough Council. Grounds Maintenance Contract. February 2020	£579.00
09.03.2020	HM Revenue and Customs. Clerk's PAYE March 2020	£163.68
09.03.2020	NEST Employer's and Employee's Pension Contribution – J. D. Lynn March 2020	£39.08
09.03.2020	Sound and Vision, Darlington. New CCTV System	£1,490.00

Chairman's Signature.....*S.T. Appleton*..... Date.....*06/04/2020*.....

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Date	Supplier	Amount
09.03.2020	Archaeo Environment Ltd. Parish Council's contribution to the Statement of Significance for Platform 1 public house and former coal depot.	£500.00
09.03.2020	Mrs. M. Beadle. Cleaning materials for Parish Council building	£10.20
12.03.2020	Scottish Power. Gas Monthly	£30.00
18.03.2020	Barclaycard Commercial. Barriers Direct Mirror £65.94 (inc. VAT) Wright's Office Supplies Box of A4 paper £11.25, 100 plastic wallets £1.69 and reported book £1.59 plus VAT = £17.43	£83.37
24.03.2020	BT Hub Monthly	£40.49
31.03.2020	Cleaner - C. I. Wood Pay	£70.00
31.03.2020	Litter Picker - J. D. Lynn Pay	£530.37
31.03.2020	Clerk - A. W. Macnab Pay	£654.72
	Total	£5,680.47

The Parish Council agreed that the retrospective payment for February 2020 and the payments for March 2020 be made.

1286. Timetable of Controls for March 2020

The Timetable of Controls report for March 2020 was presented.

Separate reports would be given later in the meeting under the heading Statement of Internal Controls and Review of the Effectiveness of Internal Controls and the Draft Annual Governance Statement for the Annual Governance and Accountability Statement 2019-20 which would enable the Parish Council to review its internal controls and their effectiveness.

The Timetable of Controls Report gave the policies which enabled the Parish Council to review the bank mandate, the expenditure limits and the scheme of delegation to the Chairman and the Clerk, the delegation to the Clerk, the payment method, and to review the current budget and the budget for the next financial year. A separate report would be made to enable the Parish Council to review the Assets Register.

The Parish Council received a statement of receipts and payments to date under each budget heading with actual and planned expenditure in the form of the Accounts Spreadsheet and Progress against the Budget Statement at the meeting.

A schedule of payments which required authorisation was included in the agenda for the meeting.

The list of regular payments was included in the schedule of payments as part of the agenda for the Parish Council meeting.

There were no cheques for the counterfoils to be signed at the meeting.

There were no losses, liabilities or damage which could lead to claims.

The Parish Council agreed to note the report.

Chairman's Signature..... *C. J. Macnab* Date..... *06/04/2020*

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1287. Assets Register

The Assets Register as at the 4th March, 2020 was given in the papers for the meeting.

The Parish Council **agreed** the Assets Register subject to the following amendments being made:

- a. The Zip Wire being recorded as being inactive.
- b. The cost and the date of purchase of the new CCTV system be recorded in the Assets Register.

The Parish Council **also agreed** that a review of the equipment in the Parish Council Meeting Room be included on the agenda for the next Parish Council meeting.

1288. Mazars External Auditors Training Session on the Annual Return (AGAR)

The Chairman reported that Mazars will be holding a training session on the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2019-20 on the 7th April, 2020 at County Hall, Durham.

The Parish Council **agreed** that the Chairman and the Clerk will attend the training session.

1289. Preparation for the Annual Audit and Annual Return (AGAR) 2019-20. Statement of Internal Controls and Review of the Effectiveness of Internal Controls

The report giving the Statement of Internal Controls and guidance on how the Parish Council will review the effectiveness of its internal controls was circulated to Parish Council before the meeting. The Clerk explained that the Parish Council must be satisfied that its financial management was adequate and effective and that sound systems of internal controls were in place. The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 required that a review of the effectiveness of the systems of internal controls must be carried out each year and will inform the preparation of the Annual Governance Statement.

The report gave the purpose of the systems of internal controls, the internal controls which were operated by the Parish Council and the Clerk and its risk assessments and risk management which were reviewed each year. The report then gave the Statement which gave the systems of internal controls for the cash book/bank reconciliation, its Financial Regulations, the order/tender controls, legal powers for each item of expenditure, payment controls, Section 137 payments, VAT reclaims, income controls, financial reporting, budgetary controls, payroll controls, office and Clerk's expenses, assets controls, the internal audit and external audit procedures which were followed by the Parish Council.

The Parish Council reviewed the effectiveness of its internal controls and **agreed** that its financial management was effective and sound systems of internal controls were in place.

1290. Preparation for the Annual Audit and Annual Return (AGAR). Draft Annual Governance Statement

The Clerk gave details of the preparation work for the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the Parish Council's 2019-20 accounts. The draft Annual Governance Statement for the 2019-20 which was given in the papers for the meeting gave details of the systems of internal control and the arrangements to comply with the statements given in the Annual Governance Statement part of the AGAR and the Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England Practitioners Guide March 2019. The Annual Governance Statement would be reviewed by the Internal Auditor, it would then submitted with the Internal Auditor's report to the Annual Parish Council meeting in May, 2020 and then to the external auditor.

Chairman's Signature..... *C J Gibbons* Date..... *06/04/2020*

Minutes agreed and approved by the Parish Council on 6th April 2020 at a meeting conducted via virtual means and e mail due to the COVID-19 emergency measures.

The Parish Council **agreed** that the Annual Governance Statement for 2019-20 gave a true representation of the systems of internal controls and compliance with the Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England Practitioners Guide March 2019.

1291. Litter Picker's National Minimum Wage increase

The Clerk reported that the National Minimum Wage would be increased from £8.21 per hour to £8.72 per hour on the 1st April, 2020. The Litter Picker is paid the National Minimum Wage. The new rate would be applied to the Parish Council's employer's contributions and the Litter Picker's contributions to his pension.

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

1292. Workplace Pension Report – Update

The Clerk reported that payments were being made to NEST for the Litter Picker's pension.

1293. Internet Connection Prices – Update

The Clerk reported that he had received a number of quotations for internet connections in the Parish Council Meeting Room. Councillor Foggett agreed to examine the quotations and recommend which quotation should be accepted by the Parish Council.

Planning Matters

1294. Planning Application deferred from the Parish Council Meeting on the 24th February 2020.

The following planning application was deferred by the Parish Council meeting on the 24th February 2020 for further consideration:

20/00104/FUL. Change of use from storage (Use Class B8) to shop (Use Class A1) including installation of new shop front, windows and doors. Building adjoining 16, Station Terrace, Middleton St. George.

The Parish Council **agreed** to object to the planning application. The Parish Council supported the residents in their objections, and on the same grounds.

1295. Street Naming

The Clerk reported that the Grendon Gardens Residents Panel had accepted the names suggested for the new estate to the rear of The Greenway.

Other Matters

1296. Section 137 Funding Request

The Parish Council received a revised request from the organisers of the VE Day Commemorations for £470 towards the cost of the Commemorations.

The Parish Council expressed disappointment that it had distanced itself from the organisation of the Commemorations when the Parish Council had started to organise it and they required further information to enable further consideration to the request for grant aid.

Chairman's Signature.....*C. J. G. [Signature]*..... Date *06/04/2020*.....

Minutes agreed and approved by the Parish Council on 6th April 2020 conducted via virtual means and e mail due to the COVID-19 emergency measures.

The Parish Council agreed that:

- a. The organisers and/or a member of the organising committee be invited to the next Parish Council meeting on the 23rd March, 2020 to give details of the events which will be taking place over the weekend of the VE Day Commemorations to enable the Parish Council to consider a grant of £470 for the event and the use of the MUGA for an event during the weekend.
- b. The organisers be informed that the Parish Council's representative on the organising committee will be Councillor Blacklee.

1297. Parking and Road Safety in the centre of Middleton St. George

a. Update on response from the Highways Officer, Darlington Borough Council

The Clerk reported that there had still not been a response from the Highways Officer. The Parish Council asked the Clerk to send a further reminder to the Highways Officer.

b. Pupil Safety. Letter from the Director of St. George's Academy

The Parish Council received a letter from the Director of St. George's CE Academy expressing concern about the safety of pupils because of parking and traffic outside the Academy and in the centre of the village.

The Parish Council agreed that the Clerk will acknowledge the letter from the Director pointing out the Parish Council has limited powers in respect of highways and parking issues and ask the Director to contact the Enforcement Team at Darlington Borough Council for their help.

1298. Grounds Maintenance Contract 2020-21 to 2022-23

The Clerk reported that he had reminded the Grounds Maintenance Officer of Darlington Borough Council that pre contract meeting was needed and asked again for some convenient dates but there had not been a response. The Clerk stated that he will contact the Grounds Maintenance Officer to ask again for some dates for the pre contract meeting.

The Clerk also reported that issues which Councillor Foggett and residents had raised in relation to the current Grounds Maintenance Contract had been forwarded to the Grounds Maintenance Officer and the responses had been sent to Councillor Foggett and residents.

1299. Items brought to the Parish Council's attention that may benefit the community and enhance the village

1299.1 Bike Track

The Vice Chairman reported that he will raise it at next meeting of the TI Airport Consultative Committee meeting in April 2020.

Chairman's Signature..... *C J Gower* Date..... *06/04/2020*

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1299.2 MUGA

The Chairman and Councillor Bullock reported on the site meeting held on 25th February 2020 with the Sports Development Officer of Darlington Borough Council, Chris Hutchinson from Durham FA, the Chairman of Middleton Rangers JFC and MSGCA Trustees, which went well. The meeting also discussed improved car parking but there was little interest in car parking at the meeting but there was a need to examine car parking in the Water Park as a whole.

The Chairman had indicated that the Section 106 Agreement for the Sadberge Road development (Ref. 13/00950/OUT) had included a funding contribution of approximately £40,000 for "Improvement of sports pitches in the vicinity of the area", but she had been informed that this was for play equipment, not pitch improvements. The Chairman had queried this and was waiting for a response. It was hoped that, as the money had not yet been allocated, it could be used for the proposed improvements to the MUGA.

1300. Parks and Grounds

1300.1 Water Park

a. Bank side work update

The Clerk reported that no response had been received from Darlington Borough Council to the question if the bank side work needed planning permission or not. The Vice Chairman reported that as it was now close to the nesting season the work will not take place until September 2020. A revised estimate for the work had been received from the contractor.

The Parish Council **agreed** that the Clerk will write to the contractor to explain the reasons for the delay in the work on the bank sides.

b. Damage in the Water Park

The police report on the incident where a 4 x 4 vehicle had been driven onto the bank side of one of the ponds was circulated with the papers for the meeting.

Councillor Foggett reported that he had checked the CCTV system and there was no record of the vehicle entering the Water Park from Station Road.

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

c. Youngsters entering the Homes by Carlton Site to the rear of High Stell

The Chairman reported that she had received a telephone call that youngsters were entering the Homes by Carlton site.

The Parish Council **agreed** that the Managing Director of Homes by Carlton and the Headteacher of St. George's CE Academy be informed of the report.

d. Model Boat Club Report

The Parish Council received and noted the Model Boat Club's health and safety inspection report.

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

Minutes agreed and approved by the Parish Council on 6th April 2020 at a meeting conducted via virtual means and e email due to the COVID-19 emergency measures.

e. Mirror at the entrance to the Water Park

Councillor Blacklee reported that the mirror would be fitted on the weekend of the 14th and 15th March, 2020.

f. Entrance Sign

It was reported that Councillors Blacklee and Foggett will re-erect the entrance sign.

g. Water Levels in Pond 2

Councillor l'Anson reported that the water level in Pond 2 was low and was getting lower. There was no sign of water draining out of the sluice valve but normally it would flow down the drains at the front of the Water Park.

The Vice Chairman agreed to check the water levels. Mr. Appleton would also be asked if he had noticed that the water levels in Pond 2 was becoming lower.

h. Request from a resident of High Stell for trees in the Water Park to be lowered

The Parish Council received a request from a resident of High Stell whose property bordered the Water Park for the trees in the Water Park which overhang his property to be pruned to improve the light to his property.

The Parish Council agreed that the Clerk will write to the resident stating that any tree work in the Water Park will have to wait until authority has been given by Darlington Borough Council to the work on the bank sides of the ponds which will include the trees which border properties on High Stell.

1300.2 Play Area and Playing Field

The Vice Chairman reported that he regularly inspects the play area and playing field and no faults have been found. Cracks had been found in the floor in the Play Area but repairs were in hand.

The Parish Council received information from County Durham Association of Local Councils on a Play Area Training Course at Seaham on the 21st April 2020. If Parish Councillors wished to attend they should inform the Clerk.

1300.3 The Front, Middleton One Row

a. Middleton One Row Woodland Management Project Update

The Chairman reported that arborist impact assessment was awaited.

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

The Parish Council received a quotation for £660.00 from E & M. Leighton for work to reduce the height of the trees on Parish Council land to the rear of 38, The Front, Middleton One Row which included a report which will accompany the planning application.

The Parish Council agreed to accept the quotation of £660.00 from E & M Leighton for work to reduce the height of the trees on Parish Council land to the rear of 38, The Front, Middleton One Row.

Chairman's Signature..... *C J Gibson* Date..... *06/04/2020*

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c. Sculpture Update

The Chairman reported that no further information had been received on the sculpture.

1301. Almora Hall Sheds

The Parish Council received an anonymous report that sheds had been erected at Almora Hall. There were no planning applications on the Borough Council's planning website for Almora Hall.

The Parish Council **agreed** that the Clerk will refer the anonymous report to the Planning Officer at Darlington Borough Council.

1302. Teesside International Airport Consultative Committee

The Vice Chairman reported that the next Consultative Committee meeting would be in April 2020.

1303. VE Day Commemorations 8th May, 2020 – Insurance response

The response from the Parish Council's insurers to Councillor Bullock's query at the last Parish Council meeting on the 24th February 202 was circulated with the papers for the meeting. The response was not satisfactory and the Clerk was asked to contact the insurers again to ask if the VE Day events were to be cancelled would the cancellation be covered by the Parish Council's insurance policy.

1304. Invitation from the Middleton St. George Memorial Association

The Chairman reported that an invitation had been received from the Middleton St. George Memorial Association for the Parish Council to attend the RAF and RCAF Memorial Service and Dinner on Saturday 13th June 2020.

The Parish Council **agreed** that the Memorial Association are thanked for their invitation and the Parish Council will be represented by the Chairman and Councillor Blacklee at the events on the 13th June, 2020.

1305. Annual Parish Assembly Saturday 23rd May 2020

The Chairman's report giving the proposed arrangements for the Annual Assembly was circulated with the papers for the meeting.

The Parish Council **agreed** that the Chairman will:

- a. Invite Community Groups and the British Legion to have a table. The Wildlife Group will be having a table.
- b. Send Invitation letter to the Tees Valley Mayor to speak about the airport.
- c. Ask Groundwork if there will be more information on the Woodland Management Project and Sculpture to present.
- d. Draft a leaflet for village distribution.
- e. Price up printing and distribution.

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

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1306. Councillors Reports and Items for Future Meetings

1306.1 Stockton and Darlington Railway Heritage Group

The Chairman reported that the next meeting of the Heritage Group will be held on the 13th March, 2020 at 2 p.m. in the Parish Council Meeting Room.

1306.2 What's On in Middleton St. George Leaflet

Councillor Bullock will seek the invoice for the Parish Council's listings in the leaflet and pass the invoice to the Clerk for payment.

1306.3 New Defibrillator

Councillor Blacklee reported that the new defibrillator will be installed in front of The Devonport at Middleton One Row. A new approach was being made to a benefactor to pay for the defibrillator but it may be that the Parish Council will have to pay for the cabinet.

1307. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 23rd March, 2020 at 6.30 p.m. Planning.

The meeting ended at 8.10 p.m.

Chairman's Signature.....*C J Grew*..... Date.....*06/04/2020*.....