



Middleton St George Parish Council

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DUE TO THE CORONAVIRUS LOCKDOWN THIS SCHEDULED MEETING COULD NOT TAKE PLACE IN PERSON. A REMOTE VIRTUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING WAS HELD USING ZOOM UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND POLICE AND CRIME PANELS (CORONAVIRUS) (FLEXIBILITY OF LOCAL AUTHORITY POLICE AND CRIME PANEL MEETINGS) (ENGLAND AND WALES) REGULATIONS 2020.

Minutes of the Remote Virtual Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 12th October, 2020

Present: Councillor Mrs. C. Gilsenan (Chairman),
Councillor S. Crowther (Vice Chairman),
Councillor L. Foggett,
Councillor A. Marshall entered the meeting at Minute No. 1486.
Councillor D. Whitfield.
Alan Macnab, Clerk.

In Attendance: 1 Member of the Public and Ross Chisholm and Peter Bainbridge of the Friends of the Stockton and Darlington Railway.

The meeting started at 6.30 p.m.

1476. Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Virtual Meeting and especially Ross Chisholm and Peter Bainbridge from the Friends of the Stockton and Darlington Railway.

1477. Public Participation Session

The Clerk reported that no requests had been made to address the Parish Council.

1478. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Blacklee and l'Anson because of work commitments.

The Parish Council **agreed** to accept the apologies from Councillors Blacklee and l'Anson.

1479. Declarations of Interests

No declaration of interests were made.

1480. Minutes of the Virtual Parish Council Meeting on the 14th September, 2020 and the Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting on the 24th September, 2020

The minutes of the Virtual Parish Council meeting held on the 14th September, 2020 and the Extraordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on the 24th September, 2020 were presented.

The Chairman asked for paragraph 1 of Minute No. 1475 of the Extraordinary Meeting on the 24th September, 2020 to be amended to read "The Clerk reported that he had written to the County Durham Association of Local Councils for advice on whether the Parish Council could act as Treasurer in principle for a temporary period to the Save Fighting Cocks Community Pub Group and a reply was awaited."

Chairman's Signature..... *C J Gilsenan* Date *09/11/2020*

Councillor Whitfield reported that he was not present at the Extraordinary Meeting on the 24th September, 2020.

The Parish Council agreed that the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on the 14th September, 2020 and the Extraordinary Meeting on the 24th September were a true record of the proceedings of the meeting with the amendment included for the meeting on the 24th September, 2020 and the deletion of Councillor Whitfield from the list of attendees. The Chairman signed the minutes after the meeting and returned them to the Clerk.

1481. Fighting Cocks Heritage Hub

Peter Bainbridge of the Friends of the Stockton and Darlington Railway referred to the spreadsheet which detailed a number of projects related to the Fighting Cocks Heritage Hub and drawings for the restoration work of the Fighting Cocks Waiting Shed which were sent to the Parish Council with the papers for the meeting. There was a need for Darlington Borough Council as the land owner to give the go ahead to enter its land to carry out the excavation and restoration work.

He referred to the filming at Fighting Cocks which would take place on the 13th October which, together with the projects, would get the message across to the public about the Stockton and Darlington Railway to encourage them to help with the projects.

Peter Bainbridge reported that the Heritage Action Zone Stockton and Darlington Railway Festival will be held later in October and he gave details of the events which will take place.

The Chairman explained to the meeting that the Parish Council had set up an MSG Stockton and Darlington Railway Heritage Steering Group in January 2020, with members from the Parish Council, the Friends of S&DR, MSG Local History Group, MSG inBloom, and other interested members of the community.

Peter Bainbridge reported that the sleeper blocks which had been retrieved from The Whinnies Nature Reserve were in store and a decision would be taken by the Friends on where they would be located in the future. Peter Bainbridge also reported that he had discussed the possibility of a mural depicting the Stockton and Darlington Railway with the owner of a property at Fighting Cocks and he had been in contact with an art teacher who had indicated that he may carry out the work. He then referred to a project in Stockton on Tees where school children were asked to name streets with a railway theme on new developments which might be replicated in Middleton St. George.

Following the presentation and discussion, it was agreed that a Zoom meeting be arranged for the MSG S&DR Heritage Steering Group to progress the Heritage Hub proposal.

Peter Bainbridge and Ross Chisholm were thanked for their presentation.

1482. Parish Councillor Vacancies

1482.1 Co-option to the Parish Council

The Clerk reported that one application had been received for the three Parish Councillor vacancies from Andrew Jones. The Parish Council received the Co-option Procedures.

Andrew Jones addressed the meeting and then left the meeting.

Following a discussion, it was proposed by the Vice Chairman, seconded by Councillor Foggett and unanimously agreed that Andrew Jones be co-opted to the Parish Councillor.

Chairman's Signature..... *C J Gibson* Date..... *09/11/2020*

Andrew Jones returned to the meeting and was welcomed to the Parish Council. Councillor Jones undertook to send the Clerk his completed Acceptance of Office and Register of Members Interests Forms.

1482.2 Advertisement for Parish Councillor Vacancy

The Clerk reported that the advertisement for the one Parish Council vacancy had been displayed in the three notice boards, on the Parish Council's website and Facebook page with a closing date of the 30th October, 2020.

1483. Coronavirus Update

The Clerk reported that no new information had been received from the CDALC but he expected that further guidance would be issued as a result of the announcement by the Government on the 12th October, 2020.

1484. Community Safety

1484.1 CCTV extension in the Water Park. Update

Councillor Foggett reported that difficulties were being experienced in connecting the CCTV system to the Model Boat Club building and discussions were on-going with EE and Vodaphone to resolve the problems.

1484.2 Community Speed Watch

Councillor Foggett reported the Speed Watch volunteers had been out three times monitoring speed in the village with mixed results. Councillor Foggett agreed to contact Councillor Whitfield to enable him to come to the next Speed Watch monitoring. Councillor Foggett reported that the average speed detected was between 37 to 38 MPH which was not excessive and motorists were being forewarned by other motorists using mobile communications that Speed Watch monitoring was taking place and they were slowing down.

Reference was made to an exercise on the A67 which was thought to be Speed Watch related. Councillor Foggett responded that the police had informed him that the A67 was unsuitable for Speed Watch operations.

1484.3 Speed Monitoring

Councillor Foggett reported that the Speed Monitor was not being used. The Speed Watch Co-ordinator was looking to see if a solar panel can be fitted to the Speed Monitor. If a solar panel can be fitted the Speed Monitor will stay in one place but it can be turned round to monitor traffic on the opposite side of a road. Once a price was obtained for fitting the solar panel he suggested that the Speed Monitor be placed at the bottom of Killinghall Row by the 30 MPH sign.

1484.4 PACT

A virtual PACT meeting had been held on the 29th September, 2020 (via the Darlington Police Facebook Page) when the new PCSO was introduced.

1485 Website Accessibility Regulations Compliance

Councillor Foggett reported that the website was compliant with the Regulations and he would put a statement on the website stating that it was compliant with the Regulations. There was a problem with the voice recognition on the website. Councillor Jones agreed to help Councillor Foggett with this.

COUNCILLOR MARSHALL ENTERED THE VIRTUAL MEETING.

Financial Matters

Chairman's Signature..... *CJ Gibson* Date..... *09/11/2020*

1486. Financial Report as at the 5th October, 2020

The Clerk gave the financial report for the 2020-21 Financial Year as at the 5th October, 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	
September 2020	
21.09.2020 Econoprint, Darlington. Printing of NDP letters	£18.90
Community Account:	
Income	- £141,948.08
Expenditure	- <u>£ 18,683.93</u>
Balance as at the 5th October, 2020	£123,264.15

b. Progress against the Budget

The income as at the end of the 2020-21 financial year was expected to be £146,660.62 and the anticipated expenditure £69,315.42 which would result in a surplus carry forward of £77,344.20 to the 2021-22 financial year.

c. Bank Reconciliation

The bank reconciliation as at the 5th October, 2020 showed that the Community Account spreadsheet balance held by the Parish Council and the Community Account balance held by the bank was £123,264.15.

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 6th September to the 6th October, 2020 were presented. The bank statement showed the balance in the Community Account at the bank on the 5th October, 2020 was £123,264.15.

1487. Payments received and payments for approval

Payment In:

Date	Customer	Amount
21.09.2020	Friends of the Stockton and Darlington Railway. Contribution to the Platform 1 Questionnaires	£200
21.09.2020	Darlington & District Model Boat Club. Reimbursement for small Water Park sign.	£35.00
	Total	£235.00

Payments for Approval:

Chairman's Signature..... *C J Grewer* Date..... *09/11/2020*

a. Retrospective Payments – September 2020

Date	Supplier	Amount
17.09.2020	Elliott Consultancy Limited. Tree Survey	£558.00
17.09.2020	Peter Green, Plumber, Darlington. Annual Gas Safety Check	£55.00
	Total	£613.00

b. Payments for Approval October 2020

Date	Supplier	Amount
07.10.2020	Scottish Power. Electricity Monthly	£5.00
12.10.2020	Darlington Borough Council. RoSPA Inspection Report and Play Area Repairs	£315.84
12.10.2020	Scottish Power. Gas Monthly.	£30.00
12.10.2020	HMRC. Clerk's PAYE Contribution	£168.16
12.10.2020	C. I Print. NDP Consultation Leaflets	£155.00
12.10.2020	Jo-Anne Garrick Limited. NDP Consultant's Fee	£1,680.00
12.10.2020	Prontaprint Darlington. Printing of NDP Booklets and Maps	£385.39
12.10.2020	Famous Flyers, Stockton on Tees. Distribution of the NDP leaflets	£100.00
	Brclaycard Commercial. 22.08.2020 Norton Anti-Virus Software. Note. Norton have been informed that the software is not needed now and a repayment is being arranged. £89.99.	
19.10.2020	21.09.2020 Econoprint Darlington. Printing of NDP Green Spaces letters for The Greenway and Ropner Gardens £18.90	£108.89
23.10.2020	BT Hub Monthly	£31.99
27.10.2020	NEST Pension. J. D. Lynn, Litter Picker. October 2020	£47.44
30.10.2020	Cleaner – C. I. Wood Pay	£70.00
30.10.2020	Litter Picker – J. D. Lynn Pay	£563.31
30.10.2020	Clerk – A. W. Macnab Pay	£673.04
	Total	£4,334.06

The Parish Council **confirmed** the approval of the retrospective payments for September 2020 which were authorised by the Chairman and Vice Chairman under delegated powers and **agreed** that the payments for October 2020 be made. The payment of £1,788.82 to Darlington Borough Council for the Grounds Maintenance Contract from April to July 2020 be deferred until after the meeting with the Borough Council's Grounds Maintenance Officer.

1488. Timetable of Controls for October 2020

The Timetable of Controls report for October 2020 was presented.

The Clerk reported that:

a. Arrangements were being made for Councillor Blacklee to audit the Parish Council's finances for the July to September 2020 period.

b. The first draft of the three year budget was presented to the Parish Council on the 13th July, 2020. The second draft will be presented to this meeting.

Chairman's Signature..... *C. J. Gibson* Date..... *09/11/2020*

- c. Detailed estimates of all receipts and payments including the use of reserves and all sources of funding for the following financial year in the form of a budget will be presented to this meeting as part of the second draft of the three year budget.
- d. Preparation of the annual budget proposals in relation to the council's three year forecast of revenue and capital receipts and payments including recommendations for the use of reserves and sources of funding will be presented to this meeting as part of the second draft of the three year budget.
- e. A report will be made to this meeting to enable the Parish Council to review the salaries budget.
- f. The statement of receipts and payments to date and progress against the budget statement was presented at this meeting.
- g. A report will be made to this meeting giving the arrangements including the bank mandate to enable the Parish Council to review the banking arrangements.
- h. The schedule of payments which required authorisation was included as part of the agenda for this Parish Council meeting. Invoices were provided to support the schedule of payments.
- i. A list of regular payments was presented at its meeting. No cheques are being drawn up during the Covid-19 pandemic and they were replaced by standing orders and bank transfers.
- j. There were no losses, liabilities or damage which could lead to claims in September and October 2020 to date.
- k. The Assets Register will be reviewed by the Parish Council on the 9th November, 2020

The Parish Council agreed to note the report giving the controls for October 2020.

1489. Review of the Salaries Budget and the Banking Arrangements

The report giving Salaries Budget and Banking Arrangements were given as appendices to the Timetable of Controls report.

1489.1 Salaries Budget Review

The Salaries budget of £15,951 was approved by the Parish Council on the 11th November, 2019.

The following table gives the working hours, grade, gross pay, deductions and net pay of all three employees.

Employee	Working Hours	Grade and Pay Point	Gross Pay	Deductions	Net Pay
Clerk	60 per month	Spinal Column Point 22 (£14.02 per hour) of the National Scale for Local Government Staff	£841.20 per month. £10,094.40 per annual	PAYE £168.16 per month. PAYE £2,017.92 per annum	£673.04 per month. £8,076.48 per year
Litter Picker	68 per month	National Minimum Wage for Adults £8.21 per hour	£592.96 per month. £7,115.52 per year	Pension (5%) £29.65 per month Pension £355.80 per year	£563.31 per month. £6,759.72 per year
Cleaner	2 hours each week	-	£70.00 per month £840.00 per year	None. None	£70.00 per month. £840 per year.

Chairman's Signature..... *C.J. Gibson* Date..... *09/11/2020*

The net annual pay summary is as follows:

Clerk	£8,076.48
Litter Picker	£6,759.72
Cleaner	£840.00
Total	£15,676.20

The following table gives the budget and expenditure on salaries as at the 30th September 2020.

Item	Budget	Actual to Date	Year End
Salaries	£15,951	£7,838.10	£15,951

1489.2 Banking Arrangements Review

The Clerk gave details of the Community Account and the Active Saver Accounts 1 and 2 and banking arrangements with Barclays Bank. Payments were being made by electronic bank transfers during the pandemic but the Parish Council had a cheque book and paying in book and a Barclaycard debit card for small purchases with a maximum limit of £500. Monthly standing order payments were for gas, electricity and the internet connection to the Parish Council building and a direct debit for any monthly Barclaycard expenditure. All expenditure is authorised by the Parish Council meeting each month before payment is made except for the standing order utility payments which are reported to the monthly Parish Council meeting and emergency payments which are authorised by the Chairman and Vice Chairman under delegated powers. The authorised cheque signatories are the Chairman or Vice Chairman and the Clerk. The Parish Council has an account with the Darlington Credit Union.

The Parish Council reviewed the salaries budget and banking arrangements and were satisfied that the safeguards were in place.

1490. Funding Allocation for the Clearance and Re-Instatement work to the south facing bank side in the Water Park

A report giving proposals for funding the project to clear the south facing bank side of all vegetation and undergrowth and reseeding with grass seed and reinstating the bank side was given in the papers for the meeting. The Clerk explained that the clearance work would take place in the Autumn of 2020 and the cost would be £20,688 (including VAT) and the cost of reseeding and reinstating the bank side would take place in the Spring of 2021 and cost £9,702 (including VAT). The report gave the budget headings from which amounts may be taken to fund the project.

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

- a. Funding of the clearance work would be taken from the following expenditure budget headings in the 2020-21 financial year

Budget Heading	Allocation
Water Park	£2,000
PC Property Maintenance	£3,000
Contingency	£2,000
Elections	£5,200
Transfer from Active Saver Account 1	£8,488
Total	£20,688

- b. Funding of the reseeding and reinstatement work would be taken from the following expenditure budget headings in the 2021-22 financial year.

Chairman's Signature..... *C.J.G. Sena* Date..... *09/11/2020*

Budget Heading	Allocation
Water Park	£2,000
Contingency	£1,000
PC Property Maintenance	£3,000
Transfer from Active Saver Account 1	£3,702
Total	£9,702

1491. Draft Budgets for 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24

The second draft of the budgets for 2021-22 to 2023-24, a list of community projects which may benefit and enhance the village and the NDP Community Actions List were circulated with the papers for the meeting. The Parish Council was asked to consider the list of projects and to consider grants for certain projects.

The Parish Council considered that it may be necessary to increase the precept for the 2021-22 financial year which could be justified by the number of community projects. The purchasing of additional speed monitors was suggested as a community project for 2021-22.

The Clerk reported that a resident had raised the location of a possible bike track with him and suggested that the bike track be located where the zip wire was located in the playing field or to the rear of the Parish Council building in the Water Park. The resident reported that the zip wire was never used when it was working.

The Parish Council were of the opinion that the area where the zip wire was located and behind the Parish Council building were not large enough for a bike track and there would be an issue of noise being near residential properties in the playing field. There was no suitable location in the village for a bike track. The Vice Chairman reported that he had asked the Airport Manager if he can identify any land at the airport and he was awaiting a response.

In the Autumn of 2018 a resident had had an accident due to the ground sinking underneath. The Parish Council had considered quotes for the cost of laying a solid base for the zip wire at its meeting on 11th February 2019 which were in excess of £20,000, and had agreed at that meeting not to proceed, and that the zip wire should be left disabled.

The other issue raised by the resident of play facilities for disabled children had been included in the list of community projects.

The Parish Council agreed that:

- a. Councillors come to the next meeting on the 9th November, 2020 with projects they would like funding from the 2021-22 and the following years budgets.
- b. Because the cost of laying a solid base for the zip wire was in excess of £20,000 and beyond the Parish Council's finances to afford, the zip wire which continued to be out of action since the accident be sold or scrapped.
- c. At the meeting on 9th November, the Parish Council consider whether to increase the precept, and if so by how much – with robust justification.
- d. The Clerk obtain quotes for removal of the zip wire.

1492. Arrangements for the Councillor Audit of Accounts for July to September, 2020.

The Clerk reported that Councillor Blacklee would be asked to audit the accounts for the July to September 2020 quarter.

Chairman's Signature..... *C. J. Blacklee* Date..... *09/11/2020*

1493. Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2019-20 Update

The Clerk reported that the AGAR for the 2019-20 financial year had been received back from Mazars, the external auditors and there were no issues which required to be brought to the attention of the Parish Council.

1494. Transparency Code for 2019-20

The Clerk was asked to send the Transparency Code to Councillor Foggett for inclusion on the website.

1495. Request from the Cleaner for a Pension

The Clerk reported that the Cleaner, Claire I. Wood, had requested the Parish Council to enroll her into a pension scheme.

Under Section 9 of the Workplace Pensions Regulations 2008 employers have obligations to Entitled workers who are workers aged 16 to 74 and earn less than £5,824 can require an employer to arrange for them to join a pension scheme. The scheme does not have to be a qualifying scheme i.e. a defined contribution scheme, a defined benefit scheme or a hybrid scheme (a combined defined contribution/defined benefit scheme) and the employer does not have to contribute to it. Claire I. Wood comes into this category of employee.

Advice was received from the Pensions Regulator stating that if your member of staff's earnings were £192 a week (£833 a month) or less, you do not have to put them into a pension scheme that you pay into unless they ask to join the scheme.

The Clerk stated that the Parish Council use the NEST Pensions Scheme and contributes 3% and the Litter Picker contributes 5% of his gross earnings to the NEST Pension Scheme on a monthly basis and that if the Parish Council enrolled Claire I Wood into the NEST Pension Scheme her contributions and the Parish Council's contributions as her employer should be the same as the employer's contribution to the Litter Picker's pension. The additional employer's contributions can be contained within the Parish Council's budget.

The Parish Council **agreed** that:

- a. Claire I. Wood, the Cleaner, be enrolled in the NEST Pension Scheme.
- b. It should treat Claire I. Wood in the same way as the Litter Picker and the Parish Council should contribute 3% of her gross earnings to her pension scheme i.e. £2.10 per month. It had been suggested to Claire I. Wood that she may wish to contribute 5% of her earnings to her pension which would be £3.50 per month and her net pay will become £66.50 per month/
- c. Claire I. Wood be enrolled into the NEST Pension Scheme from the 1st November, 2020.

Planning Matters

1496. Planning Decisions taken by Darlington Borough Council

It was reported that the following planning decisions had been taken by the Borough Council:

- a. 20/00482/TF. Works to 4 No. trees protected under group Tree Preservation Order (No.5) 1968 - Oak(T3) and Horse Chestnut(T4) 2 no Leyandii (T1,T2) - crown lift up to 5m, crown clean and removal of deadwood. 5 Church Lane, Middleton St. George. Planning permission granted
- b. 20/00578/TF. Works to 1 No. Horse Chestnut tree protected under Tree Preservation Order (No.7) 1980 - Pruning to part of west facing crown; pruning to lower branches as indicated on attached information (amended description 06/08/2020). 1 Cedar Grove, Middleton St. George. Planning permission refused.

Chairman's Signature..... *CJ Gilson* Date..... *09/11/2020*

- c. 20/00638/FUL. Change of use of land from open space to enclosed garden and re-location of rear 1.8m high boundary fence (Retrospective Application). 49 St Georges Gate Middleton St. George. Planning permission granted.
- d. 20/00652/PLU. Demolition of existing conservatory and erection of single storey rear extension. 10 The Paddock, Middleton St. George. Planning permission refused.
- e. 20/00660/FUL. Replacement of WC facility including ramped access. Durham Tees Valley Airport Teesside Airport Road, Middleton St. George. Planning permission granted.
- f. 20/00747/TFC. Notification to carry out works to 7 no. trees in a designated conservation area - as per arborists report including felling of 1 no. Gilead tree. 29 Church Lane Middleton St. George. Prior planning permission granted.
- g. 20/00752/CON. Partial approval of details reserved by Condition 6 (affordable housing - 4. no bungalows) attached to planning permission attached to planning permission 17/01195/OUT dated 30 May 2019 for Outline planning application for the erection of up to 330 residential dwellings (Use Class C3), with associated landscaping and engineering works, 3 new retail units and provision of a new single form Primary School. Field At OSGR E435307 N513463 Yarm Road, Middleton St. George. Planning permission granted.
- h. 20/00786/NMA. Non Material Amendment of planning permission 17/01119/FUL allowed on appeal 03 June 2019 (Erection of an agricultural worker's dwelling, livestock barn and associated footpath diversion) to permit a change of external wall material from buff brick to 100mm pitch faced buff Yorkshire stone. White House Farm Sadberge Road, Middleton St. George. Planning permission granted.

1497. New Planning Applications

The following new planning applications were submitted for the Parish Council's consideration.

- a. 20/00815/FUL. Erection of single storey conservatory to rear elevation. 1, Middleton Lane, Middleton St. George.
- b. 20/00814/FUL. Erection of garage to side elevation. 55 Woosington Drive Middleton St. George.
- c. 20/00871/FUL. Demolition of existing conservatory and erection of single storey rear extension. 10 The Paddock, Middleton St. George.

The Parish Council **agreed** to make no comments on the three new planning applications.

1498. Neighbourhood Development Plan

The Chairman's report giving an update on the Neighbourhood Development Plan was submitted with the papers for the meeting.

The Chairman reported that the consultation period on the pre submission Plan commenced on the 28th September and will end on the 23rd November 2020.

The following actions had been taken:

- Information, documents and online survey on the Parish Council website
- A press release sent to the Northern Echo with similar information (as advised by Jo-Anne Garrick, the Planning Consultant), to help raise awareness of the consultation.
- Leaflets printed and distributed to all households in the parish (plan area)

Chairman's Signature..... *CJ Gibson* Date..... *09/11/2020*

- For those who could not access the internet, the leaflet advised them to make an appointment with the Clerk to view the documents.
- The Clerk sent letters to statutory consultee bodies.
- Prior to the pre-submission consultation period, the Clerk wrote in advance to owners of land for which designated local green space and protected open spaces giving the proposals.

Details of the expenditure were given to the meeting which would be taken from £8,590 NDP Grant.

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

1499. Platform One Public House Group

The Chairman reported that the Extraordinary Parish Council meeting on the 24th September, 2020 had agreed in principle to act as temporary Treasurer to the Group until it became incorporated and advice had been received from CDALC. As an unincorporated body the Group could not open a bank account. The Clerk was making enquiries with Barclays Bank to find out the procedures for opening a separate bank account for the Group. When the Group became incorporated the bank account will be transferred to the Group.

The Chairman also reported that the Group were going through the Action Plan.

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

1500. Government's Planning for the Future White Paper

The Chairman reported that the Parish Council's response which had been drafted by Jo-Anne Garrick, the NDP Planning Consultant was circulated to Parish Councillors for their comments and amendments. If there were any further amendments they should be sent to the Chairman when the final submission will be made before the closing date of the 29th October, 2020.

Other Matters

1501. Grounds Maintenance Contract

The Clerk reported that he was waiting for a date for the Zoom remote meeting and confirmation that the Borough Council's Grounds Maintenance Officer can access Zoom and that he would ask again when a date for the meeting can be held.

The Clerk reported that he had received an invoice for ££1,788.82 from Darlington Borough Council for the work carried out under the contract for the period from April to July 2020. The Parish Council expressed concern that between April and June no Grounds Maintenance work was carried out because of the pandemic. The grass cutting started in June and the allotment hedges had not been cut.

The Parish Council **agreed** that the invoice should not be paid until the issues that no work had occurred between April and June, grass cutting started in June and the allotment hedges had not been cut had been discussed in a meeting with the Grounds Maintenance Officer which will be attended by the Chairman, Councillor Foggett and the Clerk.

1502. Request for Section 137 Grant

The Clerk reported that a request for funding under Section 137 of the Local Government Act had been received from the Great North Air Ambulance.

The Parish Council **agreed** to make a Section 137 Grant of £200 to the Great North Air Ambulance.

Chairman's Signature..... *CJ Gibson* Date..... *09/11/2020*

1503. Trees

1503.1 Survey of Trees in the Water Park, the Playing Field and The Front

The Parish Council received the survey of trees on Parish Council land in the Water Park, the Playing Field and The Front at Middleton One Row which had been carried out by Elliott Consultancy Limited.

The Parish Council **agreed** that the trees on its land be monitored for any deterioration in line with the tree survey but that work be carried out on those trees which were identified as needing immediate attention.

1503.2 Request from residents for tree work on Parish Council land

The Clerk reported that requests had been made by residents for the trees on the footpath in the Playing Field to the rear of Mount Pleasant Close, in the playing field to the rear of 27, Woodlands Green and in the Water Park to the rear of 58, High Stell to be reduced in height because they were overshadowing the properties or potentially could injure people on the footpath in the playing field.

The Parish Council **agreed** that quotations be obtained for the tree work in the three locations which will be considered at the Parish Council on the 9th November, 2020.

1504. Parks and Grounds

1504.1 Water Park

a. Provision of Lifebuoys/Throw Ropes. Request made to RoSPA for new Safety Inspection

The Clerk reported that a request had been made for a new safety inspection of the Water Park to be carried by RoSPA and the quotation for the work was awaited.

b. Proposal for the MUGA

The Chairman reported that she will make a report to the next meeting of the Parish Council on the 9th November, 2020 on the proposal for the MUGA.

c. Mirror at the entrance

The Clerk reported that Councillor Blacklee had not reported on the re-siting of the mirror.

d. Annual Gas Safety Check

The Clerk reported that the annual gas safety check of the Parish Council building was carried out on the 16th September, 2020. There were no issues highlighted apart from the exterior overflow pipe was missing due to vandalism but the Gas Safety Engineer will replace the pipe.

1504.2 Play Area and Playing Field

The Vice Chairman reported that he had carried out the health and safety inspection and there were no issues of concern to be brought to the attention of the Parish Council. The Vice Chairman sked the Clerk to contact the Ply Area Technician at Darlington Borough Council for his view on the rope at the end of the pole on the tyre swing was beginning to show signs of wear.

1504.3 The Front, Middleton One Row

a. Woodland Management Project Update

Chairman's Signature..... *CJ Gibson* Date *09/11/2020*

The Chairman reported that she had been in contact with Groundwork. The Project will have to be redrafted because of the blanket Tree Preservation Orders on all the trees on The Front. The Chairman had discussed the quotation from Elliott Consultancy Limited for a survey of the trees on the river bank side to determine if it can be paid for under the grant received for the work. A response was awaited from Groundwork.

b. Steps at the eastern end of The Front repair work Update

The Clerk reported that he had held an onsite meeting with the Borough Council's Rights of Way Officer and Technical Officer on the 8th October, 2020 to discuss a price for the work to repair the steps. Barriers had been placed across both ends of the steps to prevent access. Various walking groups and ramblers had been informed that the steps were closed because they were unsafe and notices had been placed on the website and Facebook page. The quotation for the repair work was awaited.

c. Tree work on Parish Council land to the rear of 38, The Front

The response from the Assistant Planning Officer to the request from the last meeting of the Parish Council on the 14th September, 2020 for sight of the Arborist's and Structural Engineer's Reports referred to in the decision notice was submitted to the meeting.

The Parish Council **agreed** that the Clerk will inform the residents of 38, The Front that it could not take the work to the trees any further and the Clerk will ask the Clerk of Hurworth Parish Council for his guidance because he had experience of issues relating to trees on his Parish Council's land and their effects on neighbouring properties.

1505. Armed Forces Covenant

The Parish Council received information from the County Durham Association of Local Councils (CDALC) publicising the Armed Forces Covenant which a number of Parish and Town Councils in County Durham had drawn up and signed.

The Armed Forces Covenant was a pledge to acknowledge and understand that those who serve or who have served in the armed forces, and their families, should be treated with fairness and respect in the communities, economy and society they serve with their lives.

The Parish Council **agreed** to defer consideration of the Armed Forces Covenant until it had been discussed at the CDALC's Small Councils Forum.

1506. Remembrance Sunday

The Parish Council were informed by St. George's Church and St. Laurence's Church Wardens that the Remembrance Sunday Service and Wreath Laying at the War Memorial had been cancelled because of the pandemic. A restricted invite only short service with the Parish Council may be organised either in the afternoon of the 8th or at 11am on the 11th if the Parish Council wished to have one. The Clerk reported that the wreath had been delivered to his home.

The Parish Council **agreed** that, in view of the current Pandemic and mindful of the guidance which has been received from the Government via County Durham Association of Local Councils, the Chairman of the Parish Council will lay the wreath on the War Memorial on her own at 11 a.m. on the 8th November without the need for a service.

1507. Councillors' Training

The Clerk reported that he had been informed by County Durham Association of Local Councils that new Parish Councillors training would not be held until after the County Council elections in May 2021. In view of this, the

Chairman's Signature..... *CJ Gibson* Date..... *09/11/2020*

Clerk will send Councillor Jones the slides from the new Parish Councillor training which had been carried out by the Association.

1508. Councillors' reports and items for future agenda

1508.1 Parking outside the Parish Council Building

The Chairman reported that St. Laurence's Church Food Bank will be using the parking in front of the Parish Council building.

1508.2 Toilets at The Front, Middleton One Row

Councillor Whitfield asked if the toilets can be reopened for use by people visiting The Front. The Clerk responded that, having visited the toilet building, the urinals and wash hand basins were no longer in the building and it was now used as a storeroom.

1509. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 9th November, 2020 at 6.30 p.m.

The meeting ended at 8.48 p.m.

Chairman's Signature..... *CJ Gibson* Date..... *09/11/2020*