



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 9th November, 2020

Present: Councillor Mrs. C. Gilsenan (Chairman),
Councillor S. Crowther (Vice Chairman),
Councillor L. Foggett,
Councillor A. Jones,
Councillor A. Marshall,
Councillor D. Whitfield,
Alan Macnab, Clerk.

No members of the public were present.

The meeting started at 6.35 p.m.

1510. Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Virtual Meeting.

1511. Public Participation Session

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

1512. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Blacklee because of work commitments and Councillor l'Anson because of a hospital appointment

The Parish Council **agreed** to accept the apologies from Councillors Blacklee and l'Anson. Councillor Marshall agreed to contact Councillor l'Anson to ascertain any issues regarding the latter's absence at meetings.

1513. Declarations of Interests

No declaration of interests were made.

1514. Minutes of the Virtual Parish Council Meeting held on the 12th October, 2020

The minutes of the Virtual Parish Council meeting held on the 12th October, 2020 were presented.

The Parish Council **agreed** that the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on the 12th October, 2020 were a true record of the proceedings of the meeting. The Chairman signed the minutes after the meeting and returned them to the Clerk.

Chairman's Signature..... *C.J. Gilsenan* Date *14/12/2020*

1515. Parish Councillor Vacancy

The Clerk reported that no applications had been received for the Parish Councillor vacancy. The advertisement for the vacancy was circulated.

The Parish Council agreed that a further advertisement for this post, with a closing date of 1st January 2021, be placed in the three noticeboards and the Parish Council's website and Facebook page.

1516. Coronavirus Update

The Chairman reported that the new lockdown came into effect on the 5th November, 2020. The Government's guidance was that playgrounds should be kept open.

A letter was received from the Vice Chair of the Community Association asking for the gates at the entrance to the Water Park on Station Road be closed and locked again because this would not allow people to meet in cars and gather in the MUGA and prevent incidents where large amounts of litter including takeaway cartons had been found in the Water Park.

The Chairman also reported that the Model Boat Club had closed because of the difficulty in achieving social distancing but the fishing club was still in operation.

Following a discussion, the Parish Council agreed that:

- a. The Clerk will inform the Vice Chair of the Community Association that the front gates will not be closed because if the gates were locked and closed it would result in parking problems on Station Road and Streetscene could not empty the bins in the Water Park.
- b. The Litter Picker be asked to visit the Water Park on a daily basis and to clear any litter found around the road between the Community Centre and the Parish Council building and MUGA.
- c. The Clerk will update the signage in the Play Area and the MUGA and arrange for a notices to be placed on the website.

Councillor A. Jones agreed to visit the Water Park regularly to keep an eye on things.

1517. Complaint

The Parish Council were informed that a complaint had been received that the Litter Picker was seen loitering outside St. George's CE Academy. Councillor Foggett agreed to discuss the report with the Litter Picker and to reiterate that he must not to loiter anywhere on his route.

1518. Community Safety

1518.1 CCTV extension in the Water Park. Update

Councillor Foggett reported that Vodafone and EE had been approached for prices for linking the CCTV in the Parish Council building with the Model Boat Club building but that it was not affordable. The police had asked him about an incident and would be examining the CCTV to see if the culprits could be identified.

1518.2 Community Speed Watch

Councillor Foggett reported that the Speed Watch operations had been held two to three times recently in

Chairman's Signature..... *CJ. Blane* Date..... *14/12/2020*

appalling weather conditions. The Vice Chairman would be taking part in an operation on the 10th November. The operations had identified a handful of speeding motorists which would be written to by the police.

1518.3 Speed Monitor

Councillor Foggett asked the Parish Council to take a decision on fitting solar panels to the existing Speed Monitor. If solar panels were fitted it would save the battery having to be charged every two weeks for a total of 60 hours. The cost of the solar panels was £150 but it would have to be located in a fixed position. He suggested that Yarm Road was the most appropriate fixed location.

Councillor Foggett also asked the Parish Council to consider purchasing a further two Speed Monitors with solar panels. He pointed out that other Parish Councils had between three and four Speed Monitors.

Councillor Marshall expressed concern about the 40 MPH road signs at the entrance to the village before St. George's Gate and asked for the reasons for this speed limit at this point.

The Parish Council agreed that:

- a. The Speed Monitor be fitted with solar panels.
- b. The Clerk will examine the current year's budget to determine if two new Speed Monitors with solar panels can be afforded.
- c. Councillor Foggett will bring quotations for two new Speed Monitors with fitted solar panels to the next Parish Council meeting on the 14th December, 2020.
- d. The Clerk will write to the Highways Officer and the Ward Councillors to ask for the reasons for the 40 MPH signs at the entrance to the village before St. George's Gate.

1518.4 PACT

No report was given.

1519. Website Accessibility Regulations Compliance Update

Councillor Foggett reported that the voice recognition part of the Parish Council's website has been tested and worked and the website is now compliant with the Regulations and that a compliance statement would be placed on the website.

Financial Matters

1520. Financial Report as at the 2nd November 2020

The Clerk gave the financial report for the 2020-21 Financial Year as at the 2nd November, 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

Chairman's Signature..... *CJ Gibson* Date..... *14/12/2020*

Barclaycard	
September 2020	
23.09.2020. Royal British Legion. Remembrance Wreath £12.00	
Minus Norton Anti Virus Software. £89.00	
Total	CR £77.99
October 2020	Nil
Community Account:	
Income	- £142,372.11
Expenditure	- £ 23,079.49
Balance as at the 2nd November, 2020	£119,292.62

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 £68,876.42 which would result in a surplus carry forward of £77,784.20 to the 2021-22 financial year.

c. Bank Reconciliation

The bank reconciliation as at the 31st October, 2020 and 2nd November 2020 showed that the Community Account spreadsheet balance held by the Parish Council and the Community Account balance held by the bank was £119,292.62.

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 4th October to the 3rd November, 2020 were presented. The bank statement showed the balance in the Community Account at the bank on the 3rd November, 2020 was £119,292.62.

1521. Payments received and payments for approval

Payments In:

Date	Customer	Amount
02.10.2020	Darlington Borough Council. Litter Picker's Contribution. 1 st October 2020 to 31 st March, 2021.	£2,800.00
06.10.2020	HMRC. Payment of VAT Claim. July to September, 2020	£424.03
	Total	£3,224.03

Payments for Approval:

Date	Supplier	Amount
07.11.2020	Scottish Power. Electricity Monthly	£5.00
09.11.2020	Darlington Borough Council. Grounds Maintenance Contract April to July 2020	£1,788.82
09.11.2020	HMRC. Clerk's PAYE Contribution November 2020	£168.16
12.11.2020	Scottish Power. Gas Monthly.	£30.00
22.11.2020	Barclaycard Commercial. 23.09.2020 Royal British Legion. Remembrance Wreath. £12.00. 26.09.2020 Credit Norton Computer Software £89.00	CR Balance £77.99

Chairman's Signature..... *C.J. Gibson* Date..... *14/12/2020*

23.11.2020	BT Hub Monthly	£31.99
27.11.2020	NEST Pension. J. D. Lynn, Litter Picker £47.44 and C. I. Wood Cleaner £5.60 November 2020	£53.04
30.11.2020	Cleaner – C. I. Wood Pay	£66.50
30.11.2020	Litter Picker – J. D. Lynn Pay	£563.31
30.11.2020	Clerk – A. W. Macnab Pay	£673.04
	Total	£3,379.86

The Parish Council **agreed** that the payments listed in the table for November 2020 be paid.

1522. Timetable of Controls for November 2020

The Timetable of Controls for November, 2020 was submitted to the Parish Council.

The Clerk reported that:

- a. The recommendation for the precept for the 2021-22 financial year will be made to this Parish Council meeting
- b. The statement of receipts and payments to date and progress against the budget statement was presented at this meeting.
- c. 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.
- d. 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.
- e. There were no losses, liabilities or damage which could lead to claims in November 2020 to date.

The Parish Council **agreed** that it was satisfied that the activities in the Timetable of Controls had been completed.

1523. Budgets for 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24 and Precept Setting for 2021-22

The Parish Council received the Clerk's report giving how the Precept was calculated, the draft budgets for the next three financial years from 2021-22 to 2023-24 and the implications if the Precept was not increased and increased from 1% to 5% each year to enable the Precept for 2021-22 to be set. The report highlighted the budget pressures in the current and the next financial year and the list of projects to benefit the community which were presented to the Parish Council on the 12th October, 2020.

Following a discussion, it was proposed by the Vice Chairman and seconded by Councillor Marshall that the Precept be increased by 5% in the 2021-22 financial year. The Parish Council **agreed** that the Precept be increased by 5% in the 2021-22 financial year to reflect the number of projects in the Neighbourhood Development Plan and in the list of projects presented to the last meeting and to build up the balances to cope with demands in future years. The Precept will be increased from £46,086 to £48,390 on the 1st April, 2021.

1524. Review of the Assets Register

The last meeting of the Parish Council on the 12th October, 2020 agreed to defer the review of the Assets Register to this meeting.

The Assets Register was presented to enable it to be reviewed.

Chairman's Signature..... *C J Abenar* Date..... *14/12/2020*

The Parish Council **agreed** that it was satisfied that the contents of the Assets Register gave all the current assets.

Planning Matters

1525. Planning Decisions taken by Darlington Borough Council

It was reported that decisions were taken by the Borough Council on the following planning applications:

- a. 20/00674/CON. Approval of details reserved by conditions 3 (External materials), 4 (Landscaping plan), 5 (Tree protection scheme) attached to planning permission 18/00527/FUL dated 21 January 2019 (Construction of a stepped and ramped access way with wall and handrail to provide access to the Garden of Remembrance) (additional materials information received 29 September 2020) St Laurence Church, Church Lane, Middleton St. George. Approval of Discharge of Condition.
- b. 20/00689/TF. Works to 3 no. Whitebeam trees protected under Tree Preservation Order (No.2) 2007 - T2 & T3 fell/remove, T1 removal of deadwood and crown reduce and re-shape by 2.5m, as per arborists report (additional information received 19th October 2020) Lancaster House Durham Tees Valley Airport Teesside Airport Road, Middleton St. George. Notice of Tree Preservation Order Grant.
- c. 20/00713/TF. Works to 2 no. Lime trees (T.22, T.23) protected under Tree Preservation Order (no.7) 1980 - Removal of epicormic growth to the height of crown break plus the removal of deadwood (amended description 14/10/2020). 16 Castle Close, Middleton St. George. Notice of Tree Preservation Order Grant.
- d. 20/00780/TF. Felling of 1 No. Horse Chestnut Tree (T1) protected by Tree Preservation Order 1979 No 8 (T54) at: 1 Thorntree Villas, Middleton St. George. Notice of Tree Preservation Order Grant.
- e. 20/00823/PLU. Removal of garage door and installation of window, new external door and alterations to windows on side elevation. 31 Fairfax Road, Middleton St. George. Certificate of Lawfulness for proposed development.
- f. 20/00868/NMA. Non Material Amendment of planning permission 19/01139/FUL dated 05 March 2020 (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) to permit changes - Matching roof tiles rather than membrane to side extension roof, infill kitchen & utility windows, re-position first floor gable window and increase length of first floor stair window. 20 The Front, Middleton One Row. Planning approval given.

1526. Update on a Planning Application

It was reported that Darlington Borough Council had informed the Parish Council that the following application had been refused planning permission.

19/00231/OUT. Outline application for the demolition of 20a The Greenway and the erection of up to 160 dwellings, public open space, landscaping and sustainable drainage system. All matters reserved except for means of vehicular access from The Greenway. Land West Of Grendon Gardens Grendon Gardens, Middleton St. George.

1527. New Planning Applications

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

Chairman's Signature..... *CJ Gibson* Date..... *14/12/2020*

20/00922/FUL Removal of existing conservatory and erection of single storey extension to side elevation. 24, Pine Tree Grove, Middleton St. George.

20/00948/FUL. Erection of 2 no. dwellings (substitute of house type on plots 20 and 24 of planning permission 16/00972/FUL). Plots 20 and 24 Romansgate, Middleton St. George.

20/00936/FUL. Discharge of planning obligation under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 attached to planning permission 88/00789/MISC dated 11 October 1989 (Erection of a dwelling stable block and ancillary buildings for the operation of a stud farm - in outline). Field at OSGR E435307 N513463 Yarm Road, Middleton St. George.

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

20/00942/TF. Felling of 1 No. Beech tree (T2) protected under Group Tree Preservation Order 1980 (No. 7)(G1). 67, Middleton Lane, Middleton St. George.

The Parish Council **agreed** to support this planning application.

1528. Neighbourhood Development Plan Update

The Chairman reported that the consultation on the draft Plan will end on the 23rd November, 2020. A reminder that the closing date for comments was placed on the Parish Council's Facebook page.

A small number of responses had been received and were passed to Jo-Anne Garrick. Jo-Anne Garrick will update the Plan as a result of the responses received. The Plan will then be sent to Darlington Borough Council for a condition report to be drawn up. This will be followed by a six week public consultation and an independent examiner appointed by the Borough Council to consider the Plan and report to the Borough Council on the soundness of the Plan. A final check will then be carried out by the Borough Council. The Plan will be the subject of a referendum which will not be held until May 2021.

1529. Platform One Public House

The Chairman reported that the Save Fighting Cocks Community Pub Group meeting was held on the 27th October, 2020. Councillor Foggett was elected as the Treasurer and a Constitution had been drawn up. An Ordinary Business Account was being opened with Barclays Bank with two from three signatories.

A meeting of the Group will be held on the 24th November, 2020.

1530. Middleton St. George Stockton and Darlington Railway Heritage Group Update

The Chairman reported that the next meeting of the Heritage Group will be held by Zoom on the 16th November, 2020. The Fighting Cocks Heritage Hub was being progressed by the Heritage Group.

Other Matters

1531. Grounds Maintenance Contract Update

The Chairman and Councillor Foggett reported that a meeting with the Parks and Open Spaces Manager and Contract Supervisor of Darlington Borough Council was held on the 5th November, 2020.

The outstanding issues regarding the clearance of the overgrown areas along the path in the playing field from Station Road to Woodlands Green and the hedge cutting in the allotments will be carried out as soon as possible. The start date for the contract was discussed and it was agreed that the starting date will be the 27th April and not the 1st April, 2020. The meeting also agreed that the Grounds Maintenance Service invoice for

Chairman's Signature..... *CJ Gibson* Date..... *14/12/2020*

£1,788.82 will be paid by the Parish Council and that an adjustment will be made by the Parks and Open Spaces Manager for the contract's late start in the next invoice to the Parish Council.

1532. Parish Council Land Tree Work Quotations

The Clerk reported that he had asked three arborist companies for quotations for the tree work on Parish Council land in the Water Park and the Playing Field which were overhanging neighbouring properties but only one quotation was received. He asked if consideration can be deferred to the next meeting to enable more quotations to be received.

The Parish Council **agreed** that consideration of quotations be deferred to the next Parish Council meeting on the 14th December, 2020.

1533. Parks and Grounds

1533.1 Water Park

a. RoSPA Quotation for new Safety Inspection

The quotation from RoSPA for the new safety inspection of the Water Park was circulated to the Parish Council with the papers for the meeting. The Clerk reported that the previous RoSPA inspection report was carried out in May 2015.

The Parish Council **agreed** that the Clerk will circulate the May 2015 RoSPA safety inspection to Parish Councillors to determine if anything has changed since it was carried out.

b. Proposal for MUGA

The Chairman reported that there was an issue of the type of surface between a 2g and a 3g surface. There was a preference for a 3g surface. Councillor Marshall asked if he could become a member of the Working Group.

The Parish Council **agreed** that Councillor Marshall will become a member of the Working Group.

c. Mirror at the entrance Update

The Clerk reported that Councillor Blacklee will fit the mirror during the weekend of the 7th and 8th November, 2020.

1533.2 Play Area and Playing Field

a. Health and Safety Inspection. Report on the tyre swing

At the last meeting of the Parish Council on the 12th October, 2020 the ice Chairman expressed concern about the safety of the tyre swing and asked the Clerk to arrange for it to be inspected by the Playgrounds Officer from Darlington Borough Council.

The Clerk reported that the Playgrounds Officer had checked the four shackle bolts which were attached to the four chains for wear. The rule was that once a shackle bolt shows more than 75% wear it should be changed for a new one. His inspection of the four bolts on the 14th October, 2020 found that all four bolts were all well under 50% wear and that if the tyre swing was to be subject to a RoSPA it would pass without doubt.

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

Chairman's Signature..... *C.J. Gibson* Date *14/12/2020*

b. Car park

An email was circulated from Mr. Hill, the owner of the Londis Convenience Store informing the Parish Council that he no longer wanted to use the Playing Field Car Park for his staff to use to park their cars and the lock on the gate was missing.

The Parish Council **agreed**:

- i. To note that Mr. Hill no longer wished to use the car park.
- ii. To keep the gate on the car park.
- iii. That the Clerk will put a new lock on the gate.
- iv. That the Parish Council contact details be added to the sign at the Car Park gate.

1533.3 The Front, Middleton One Row

a. Woodland Management Project Update

The Parish Council received the Chairman's report on the project, the Management Plan which was prepared in 2014, the planning application for the work, the decision on the planning application by Darlington Borough Council, the rationale which was submitted for grant aid, the Arboricultural Impact Assessment, the updated Management Plan and the recent quotation for the tree work and a statement for consideration by the Parish Council. The email concerning the project from Mr. McBride was read to the Parish Council.

Councillor Marshall asked if the residents had been consulted on the Project. The Chairman confirmed that residents had been consulted when the Project had started in 2015.

The Chairman referred to a meeting with the Head of Planning at Darlington Borough Council at Middleton One Row on the 24th January, 2020 which discussed the work which could and could not be carried out. The carrying forward of the Project was then affected by the Covid-19 Lockdown.

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

- i. Councillors A. Marshall and A. Jones to discuss the Project with Mr. McBride.
- ii. The Clerk will contact the Head of Planning at Darlington Borough Council to ask him for the information and documents which he would like to see provided when another planning application is submitted and the criteria which he will use to judging the planning application.
- iii. The Clerk will ask Lucy Chapman of Groundwork to supply two further quotations for the tree work.

b. Unsafe Steps at the eastern end of The Front

The Parish Council received in the papers for the meeting the Borough Council's Technical Officer's report on the work which would be needed to make the steps safe but that his staff could not undertake the work.

The Parish Council **agreed** that Councillor Marshall and Jones will discuss the unsafe steps with Mr. McBride and the Clerk will obtain quotations for the repair work.

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

The Parish Council received in the papers for the meeting the reply from the Clerk to Hurworth Parish Council giving advice on how the Parish Council may insure itself from any claims which may result from claims for

Chairman's Signature..... *CJ Gibson* Date..... *14/12/2020*

structural damage to properties from trees on Parish Council land.

The advice was that the Parish Council should inform its insurance company that it has received a surveyors report and send them a copy. The insurance will probably 'takeover' the interactions with the resident, so that you and they are protected. Make no confessions or offers. Use the TPO restrictions as the safeguard because Darlington Borough Council has told the Parish Council that it cannot do any remedial work, and hence they are effectively 'taking responsibility' for their decision. The Parish Council should refer the resident to Darlington Borough Council.

The Clerk reported that he had sent the surveyor's report to the Parish Council's insurers who had advised him that as the Parish Council had exhausted the options available to them with the issue now passed to Darlington Borough Council, hopefully no further action would be required by the Parish Council, however if anything further was received to forward it to the insurers for further comment. The Clerk also reported that he had informed the residents that any claims for structural damage to their property should be referred to Darlington Borough Council.

The Parish Council **agreed** that the correspondence including the surveyor's report be referred to the Insurance Officer of Darlington Borough Council.

d. Sculpture Update

The Chairman's correspondence with the Sculptor was circulated with the papers for the meeting. Planning permission had been obtained for the height of sculpture to be 1.5 metres and the Sculptor had indicated to the Parish Council that it will be 1.8 metres high.

The Parish Council **agreed** that Groundwork be asked to discuss the changed height with the Planning Officer at Darlington Borough Council.

1534. Standards in Public Life. Public Consultation and Public Sector Surveys

The Parish Council queried why the survey was necessary when it was doing what the consultation asked the Parish Council to do. The Chairman explained that this was a Government consultation, but there did not seem to be a consultation document and it was more open-ended questions. CDALC had invited any comments which they could take forward.

The Parish Council agreed not to make any response at this time.

1535. Darlington Association of Parish Councils

The Parish Council was informed that the Chairman of the Association, Councillor Derek Dodwell of Neasham Parish Council, had resigned because he and his wife were moving away from the area. The current Vice Chairman (Councillor Lee Tate of Sadberge Parish Council) would assume the role of Acting Chairman until the Association is able to hold its AGM.

1536. Councillor Training

The Clerk reported that he had been informed by County Durham Association of Local Councils that training for new Parish Councillors would not be held until after the local elections in County Durham in May 2020 however individual remote training courses will continue to be held.

1537. Councillors' reports and items for future agenda

1537.1 St. George's and St. Laurence's Churches Food Bank

The Chairman reported that the Food Bank was starting. Anyone wishing to help in the Food Bank and who

Chairman's Signature..... *C J Gilchrist* Date..... *14/12/2020*

need to food bank's help should contact it by emailing msgfoodbank@gmail.com. A food for the Food bank can be dropped off at the Londis Convenience Store.

1537.2 Christmas 2020

The Clerk was asked to contact the Community Centre to find out the arrangements which were being made for Christmas in the village and for lighting the Christmas Tree in the Community Centre's grounds.


1537.3 New Doctor's Surgery

It was reported that the building work on the new surgery had stopped because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

1538. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 14th December, 2020 at 6.30 p.m.

The meeting ended at 8.32 p.m.

Chairman's Signature.....  Date..... 14/12/2020