

MIDDLETON-ON-SEA PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
Held in the back of Jubilee Hall, Elmer Road, Middleton-on-Sea
On Thursday 23rd March 2006

PRESENT – Councillors Wotherspoon (Chairman), Jeffrey, Mansfield, Mrs Mills, Mrs Ross (departed 7.20 p.m.), Mrs Willis, the Clerk, District Councillor Mrs Oakley, County Councillor Mrs Freeman and Mr Morrison.

1. **APOLOGIES** – Councillors Chandler, Copeland and Edey.
2. **MINUTES** –The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 23rd February 2006 having been circulated were approved and signed.
3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** – Mr Mansfield declared a prejudicial interest in Item 5(f) being a nearby resident of the junction of the A259 and B2132.
4. **ITEMS not otherwise on the Agenda but which the Chairman considered to be matter of urgency due to special circumstances** – The Clerk advised that Councillor Wilkinson had tendered his resignation on 28th February 2006 and that a suitable letter of thanks for his contribution had been sent. The vacancy has been advertised.

5. MATTERS ARISING

a) Off Site Play provision – Progress Report

The Clerk reported that Arun District Council had been requested to forward the Section 106 monies received from the Willowbrook Development (£5,560) which the Joint Western Arun Area Committee had allocated to the Shrubbs Field play area. However, the Services Director had advised that the matter was now being “administered by the Head of Planning Services in conjunction with Accountancy”. Two email requests to both parties had not elicited any response and it appeared that officers were procrastinating about the release of these funds. It was therefore proposed by Mrs Mills, seconded by Mr Mansfield, that the Clerk should be instructed not to release the cheque to ADC for £2,980 in respect of the contribution to the local public conveniences until the payment had been received. Further, the Shrubbs Car Park contribution of £1,780, due in April 2006, will be dealt with in a similar manner if the payment is not received. Both payments will be held to directly set-off the £5,560 owed. This was agreed by an overwhelming majority. The Clerk was instructed to write to the Chief Executive, Arun District Council to advise him accordingly.

b) 39 Club – Request for a Councillor to join their committee

Mr Jeffrey agreed to join the 39 Club Neighbourhood Youth Centre committee as the Parish Council’s representative.

c) Frequency of Meetings

A discussion paper was circulated to members advising that the number of meetings per annum had expanded from 11 to 47 since April 2002 and that there was scope to reduce the number of full council meetings from 11 per annum to 6 as the General Purposes committee duplicated many of the full council functions and was currently held only a few weeks after the full council meetings. It was further suggested that the full council meetings were held at 7 p.m. on a Wednesday evening, after a Development Control Meeting, and that the number of Parish Land and Property Committee meetings are reduced to three per annum. Mrs Mills proposed that 6 Parish Council meetings are held (January, March, May, July, October and December) together with 5 General Purposes committee meetings (February, April, June, September and November) together with 3 Parish Land & Property committee meetings (February, June & November). This was seconded by Mrs Ross. In accordance with Standing Orders this now stands adjourned until the next full council meeting.

d) ADC Standards Board for England DVD presentation

A letter was received from Arun District Council regarding the provision of the DVD for viewing by members. The Chairman advised that he had attended the DVD presentation at Arun District Council offices on 1st March 2006. The DVD scenario related to a non-declaration of a prejudicial interest and followed it through until the member appeared before a Committee of Members. He regarded it as quite lightweight. The Clerk was instructed to write to ADC to request the DVD for 7 days so that it could be circulated amongst members.

e) Cllr Mansfield – Standards Board Decision

Copies of the Case Summary (SBE12576.05) were circulated to members and provided to members of the public present. The Clerk advised that the Standards Board for England's Ethical Standards Officer had written and stated, *inter alia*, "My finding in this matter is pursuant to section 59(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 2000, that no action needs to be taken in respect of these matters which are the subject of the investigation. The findings may be disclosed." Mr Mansfield said he was happy with the result and would not comment further other than to draw attention to the 3 inch thick pile of correspondence which had accumulated during the process.

f) Comet Corner – Developer Contributions

The Clerk read a letter from County Councillor Mrs Freeman regarding developer contributions. It stated, *inter alia*, that the County Council will seek contributions from developers whose proposals have impacts on the highway network and where those impacts are relevant to this section of the A259 they could be applied to the proposed improvement of Comet Corner. County Councillor Mrs Freeman further stated that whilst she did advise in 2004 that there were no plans from the County Council to develop land within this parish, there is now considerable pressure to find suitable sites for housing given the South East Plan has extended building rates through to 2026. Further, she had just become aware of a TIF (Transport Infrastructure Fund) and that she will investigate this to ascertain whether it could provide funding for Comet Corner. Mrs Mills said that this was yet another delaying tactic.

Mr Mansfield left the meeting during Item 5 (f)

6. DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

Copies of the minutes dated 1st and 15th March 2006 were circulated and noted. The Clerk read a letter from Rowlands Pharmacy which confirmed that their medium and long term intentions were to continue to provide pharmaceutical services from their pharmacy in Middleton Village. Mr Mansfield said there were two vacancies on the committee and sought additional members to join. Mrs Willis agreed and joined the committee with immediate effect. The Chairman said he had received representations against planning application M/27/06 (the proposed demolition of a chalet bungalow and rebuilding of a 5 bedroomed house plus annex over garages) and requested that these were noted by the committee.

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Copies of the minutes dated 1st March 2006 were circulated and noted.

i) Countryside and the Environment Advisory Sub Committee

The Clerk reported that he, together with the Ward Members, had been invited to a meeting with Arun District Council on 9th June to discuss the proposals for allotments and a mini-soccer centre at Larksfield. The Chairman said he was advised by an ADC officer that the District Council will transfer, free of charge, the proposed allotment land to the Parish Council albeit subject to restrictive covenants preventing the land's use for development. Further, he understood that the District Council had renewed the horse paddock rental agreement for a further year and he had received representations from the tenant who is concerned about its future availability. Members were generally in favour of proceeding with the allotments and it was noted that 146 respondents to the Parish Plan questionnaire had expressed an interest in obtaining an allotment. Mr Mansfield recognised there will be costs involved but felt the council should proceed, recognising that WSCC were unwilling to provide any land. District Councillor Mrs Oakley thought it was sensible to proceed as it prevented the land from being used for development. It was agreed to progress the matter through the General Purposes committee.

Mr Mansfield suggested that following the demise of the ADC plant-a-bulb scheme the Parish Council should purchase some bulbs for September planting. It was unanimously agreed to spend up to £100 on bulbs during 2006.

Mrs Willis reported that she had met ADC's Tree and Landscape Manager at Larksfield to discuss the spacing of the skate board jumps and height of the screening. When the gaps were measured it was accepted that they were too long and this will be taken up with the installers. It was also accepted that the screening banks were too low and this will also be referred to the installers, however, raising these screens may involve further expenditure.

(ii) Joint Sea Defence & Land Drainage Advisory Sub Committee

Nothing to report.

(iii) Liaison Advisory Sub Committee

The Clerk advised:

- (a) The Annual General Meeting of the Arun District Association of Local Councils is being held on 25th April 2006 and enquired whether any members wished to attend.
- (b) Two notes from the police regarding Police Community Support Officers and the March 2006 update had been circulated.

The Clerk read a report from Mr Copeland regarding a recent Neighbourhood Management Team meeting.

iv) Projects Advisory Sub Committee

Nothing to report.

v) Roads & Transport Advisory Sub Committee

The Clerk advised that a new disabled parking bay had been marked in Middleton Road, opposite the Obelisk; work which had been outstanding since August 2004. Mrs Mills said that following the Clerk forwarding previous correspondence regarding the proposed Flansham Park pedestrian crossing to Councillor Farrell, Felpham Parish Council have now established a working party to examine pedestrian issues. A member of the public (Mr Brookland) raised the matter of cars parking on the verge in Elmer Road, opposite One Stop. County Councillor Mrs Freeman advised that matters were in hand to put posts along the verge to prevent further parking.

8. PARISH LAND AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE

Copies of the minutes dated 15th March 2006 were circulated and noted.

9. CORRESPONDENCE

The following items had been received:-

- 1. Arun Local Strategic Partnership - Newsletter
- 2. Clerks and Councils Direct
- 3. Citizens Advice Bureau – Special AGM
- 4. Local Council Review
- 5. Neighbourhood Watch – Briefing Sheet
- 6. Sussex Village of the Year 2006 – Competition details
- 7. Tsunami Explorer Scouts – Community Support request
- 8. WSCC – Briefing Notes about Avian Flu
- 9. West Sussex Sustainability Forum – Brochure “Living in West Sussex”

10. FINANCE COMMITTEE

a) Bank Accounts -

The Clerk reported on the following **Bank Accounts**

Current Account	£ 1,250.00
Business Reserve	£31,360.12
Total	£32,610.12

(b) Accounts for payment -

The following payments were approved nem.con and made:

(i) ADC (Contribution to public conveniences)*	£2,980.00
(ii) ADC (Dog Bins)	£ 391.62
(iii) Miss S Rees (Middleton News Co-ordinator's Fee)	£ 419.00
(iv) SPP (Middleton News setting/printing)	£1,640.00
(v) D F Allsopp (Clerk's quarterly fees/expenses)	£2,796.90
(vi) D F Allsopp (Quarterly postages and telephone calls)	£ 59.84
	<u>£8,287.36</u>

* Cheque not to be released until ADC payment of £5,560 is received.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mrs Willis raised the issue of avian flu and enquired whether it was appropriate to display an advice poster at the village pond. Mr Mansfield said the threat had diminished owing to the changing bird migratory patterns at this time of year. Mrs Mills said she was impressed with Middleton News this quarter and hopes the Co-ordinator will be able to maintain the same standard in the June issue. Mr Mansfield said he had yet to receive his copy of Middleton News.

County Councillor Mrs Freeman reminded those present that WSCC Cabinet Member, Lt Colonel Tex Pemberton, will be speaking to the Bognor Regis Civic Society on 28th March at the Royal Norfolk Hotel. She also said that the Joint Area Committees will be writing to Central Government to object to the proposed merger of Sussex and Surrey police forces.

District Councillor Mrs Oakley said she had helped at the clean beach operation (organised by the Middleton on Sea Association) and that some 30 people had turned out. Mrs Mills suggested that the scouts could get involved in future years. Mrs Oakley further suggested that (a) it might be appropriate to get local young people to get involved with bulb planting and (b) that ADC was promoting a "Visiting friends and relations strategy" to encourage patronisation of local establishments and that some discount tickets are to be issued.

Mrs Willis raised her concerns about doorstep callers and received advice from Mr Morrison.

12. PUBLIC DISCUSSION PERIOD

Mr Brookman said he had been told by BT that the telephone box adjacent to the telephone exchange is to stay and that he has complained on a number of occasions that it needs cleaning out, without success to date.

Mrs Mulvany said that whilst WSCC Highways use a formula to determine whether it is appropriate to install a pedestrian crossing, this criteria can be overridden if there are "special reasons".

Mr Wood expressed his concerns about the rubbish building up in the drain between Ilex Way and Silver Birch Drive. Mr Mansfield advised that this amenity strip was a haven for wild life and nobody knew who owned it. Mr Wood also expressed his concerns about the traffic volumes and speed of traffic at the mini roundabout on the junction of Elmer/Middleton/Yapton Roads.

There being no further business the Chairman reminded members that the next Meeting will be held on 27th April 2006 **at 6.30 p.m.** and the Meeting closed at 7.48 p.m.