

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 24th April 2003

PRESENT – Messrs Wotherspoon (Chairman), Aldridge, Chandler, Copeland, Janes, Mansfield, Street, Mrs Mills, the Clerk, District Councillor Mrs B Oakley, County Councillor Mrs C Freeman and Mr Morrison

1. APOLOGIES – Messrs Hills and Jarvis

2. MINUTES – The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 27th March 2003 having been circulated were approved and signed.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – Mr Copeland declared a personal interest in item 6 – Marigold Corner as he is a member of Southdean Residents Association.

4. ITEMS not otherwise on the Agenda but which the Chairman considered to be matter of urgency due to special circumstances – The Chairman expressed his thanks to all councillors who have been on the council during the present session, including those who have already left. He particularly thanked those who are now leaving the council and said that his formal thanks will be included in his Chairman's Report at the May meeting.

The Clerk advised that there had been a spate of wanton vandalism in the general vicinity of Shrubbs Field which had damaged recently purchased picnic benches and had destroyed one of a pair of free-standing goalposts. Further, the storage garage door had been forced and the parish notice board had been damaged. Pictures of the damage had been circulated to members prior to the meeting. Many members condemned the vandalism and Mr Janes reported that he had called the police to a further incident where youths were again attempting to break into the garage during the afternoon. He proposed that no further capital expenditure should be made in respect of new items for use on the playing fields for a period of one year and then be reviewed taking into account the incidences of vandalism. The proposal was seconded by Mr Chandler but was defeated by a vote of For (3) and Against (4). Other members felt it was unfair to penalise most youths who use the field when it was likely that only a few persons were involved. A number of suggestions were made about how to enhance field security and these will be considered by the Parish Land and Property Committee. The Clerk confirmed he had made 6 crime reports to the police and had advised the ADC community wardens.

5. MATTERS ARISING

a) Parish Council Election result –

The Clerk advised that 9 councillors had been elected, without a contest, for the next session and that there was scope for 3 co-options.

Local Traders Association -

Mr Copeland proposed the creation of a local Chamber of Trade, having previously circulated a briefing paper to members. He said it was an opportunity for traders and requested £100 of funding to seek to establish the Chamber. Mr Chandler said there was already a local branch of the Chamber of Trade in Bognor Regis where he used to be the Vice Chairman and thought local traders should join that. Mr Street supported that view and said there was no advantage in establishing a local centre. The Chairman suggested it was carried over to the new council and that was unanimously agreed. The Clerk was instructed to place the matter on the next Agenda.

b) Broadband Campaign -

The Clerk explained that a campaign to get Broadband at the Middleton-on-Sea telephone exchange had been commenced as the parish was being disadvantaged. Bognor Regis already had Broadband access and the Yapton exchange had a trigger level of 350 set which was significantly lower than Middleton's 500. Presently 357 households had registered for Broadband. Mr Copeland said the council should support the campaign as Middleton was being overlooked. It was unanimously agreed to support the campaign.

d) A259 Northern Relief Road (Site 6) -

Following a question raised in the Public Discussion Period of the March meeting the Chairman advised that he had spoken to Mrs Oakley and Mr & Mrs Stainton. He was advised that the new relief road and the housing will be constructed contemporaneously which is the usual practice for such developments.

e) West Sussex Structure Plan 2001-2016 -

A copy of the Examination in Public report was received. The Clerk was instructed to place it into circulation.

6. DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

The Clerk provided details of the matters arising at the last Development Control Committee meeting and confirmed that a site visit at Marigold Corner will take place on 29th April. Mr Copeland provided an overview of the planning application and whilst Mrs Oakley will attend, no member was available to accompany her. Mr Mansfield commented that the Arun District Local Plan was very well written and easy to navigate around. The Clerk was instructed to write to the District Council and compliment them on the plan.

7. GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

i) Countryside and the Environment Advisory Sub Committee

a) Country Park -

Nothing to report.

b) Footpaths -

Nothing to report.

c) Public Health and Keep Arun Tidy (including Seaweed problems) -

The Clerk advised:

- (i) A letter had been received from Arun District Council regarding the establishment of a Public Conveniences subgroup. Mr Chandler agreed to attend meetings as the council representative.
- (ii) Part of Shrubbs car park has had the white lining renewed and the remainder will be completed by the end of April.
- (iii) A copy of the West Sussex Waste Local Plan had been received. The Clerk was instructed to place the documents into circulation and place on the May agenda.
- (iv) The South East England Regional Assembly 'No Time to Waste' synopsis has been received. The Clerk was instructed to place into circulation.

The Chairman commented that there was a large litter problem in the village and whilst he was aware that some people go out and collect litter voluntarily, much remains. He has already arranged for the village to be swept and will be taking the matter up with the Services Director, ADC.

d) Tree planting and Village Pond –

WSCC have advised that there will be 7 grass cuts this year ending on 15th September. The Clerk advised that he had been approached by a parishioner suggesting that a permanent island should be constructed in the village pond to allow the ducks a safe place to nest. Mr Mansfield expressed concern at the apparent reduction in the duck population this year and suggested the installation of a floating duck house which would provide 6 nesting boxes at a cost of circa £400. Mrs Brown said some of the ducks had migrated to ponds in local gardens and Mrs Mills supported the concept of a natural island. It was agreed that the new council should consider the options and the Clerk was instructed to respond to the parishioner.

Mr Mansfield advised that a hedgerow close to Worms Lane/Wormshovels had not been replaced following Southern Water's installation of a pipeline to Ford. He requested that the Clerk contacts Arun District Council Planning Services and this was agreed nem.con.

ii) Joint Sea Defence and Land Drainage Advisory Sub Committee

The Clerk confirmed that he attended a meeting, together with Mrs Oakley, Nick Gibb MP and members of the MOS Association to discuss local coastal defences. He also confirmed ADC had responded to his letter which had been circulated to members and the MOS Association. Mrs Oakley provided a copy of ADC's letter responding to the Chairman, MOS Association. It is understood that the Coastal Defence Strategy study is imminent and when received it will need to be considered by the General Purposes committee.

iii) Liaison Advisory Sub Committee

a) ADALC, Area Partnership Panel and associated matters including Code of Conduct -

Details of Quality Parish Councils criteria and benefits were received from Defra however the council is not eligible as only 75% of its seats have been filled by candidates who stood for election. A draft copy of ADC's Homelessness Strategy was received and has been placed into circulation.

b) Newsletter -

The Clerk confirmed that the June edition is now full, however space has been reserved for a photograph of the new council members which will be taken at the May meeting.

c) Police Panel and Police Liaison -

The Clerk advised that the Mobile Police Station visit due on 1st May has been cancelled and that the Sussex Police Authority Local Policing Plan for Sussex 2003/4 is now available on the internet or at libraries. Mr Morrison said that he had asked the police whether there were any issues in the parish and vandalism had not been mentioned. He will therefore follow up the matter with the police. The Chairman thanked Mr Morrison for his dedication to his role.

d) Residents Association Committee -

Nothing to report

e) Vital Villages Scheme -

Mr Copeland advised that a meeting was held on 17th April with a significantly improved attendance. An action plan had been established to devise a questionnaire with a view to distributing it with the September edition of Middleton News. It is envisaged that the final action plan will be completed by June 2004. Mr Copeland agreed to distribute the minutes to all members.

f) Young People -

The Clerk confirmed that the Crime Prevention Report relating to the Shrubbs Field area had been circulated to all interested parties. It was hoped that a meeting will be held in June.

iv) Roads & Transport Advisory Sub Committee

WSCC provided a copy of their Guide to Road Safety in West Sussex booklet. WSCC Highways responded to the letter relating to Comet Corner indicating that traffic lights were feasible at an estimated cost of £200,000. Funding is being sought through the Local Transport Plan bidding process and it is hoped that it can be included in the 2003 LTP bid. Mrs Mills said it was the most positive letter to date and that it is essential that traffic lights are installed before the Northern Relief Road is built as traffic levels will increase making the junction intolerable. Mr Copeland said the council should respond positively and the Clerk was instructed accordingly. Mrs Mills confirmed she will be attending the next Bognor Regis Urban Transport Plan Review on 15th July.

Members noted that whilst WSCC Highways had written regarding the apparent sale of vehicles on the verge at Comet Corner, trading was allegedly continuing from an adjacent domestic dwelling. The Clerk was instructed to write to ADC Planning Services to request that they investigate the matter.

8. PARISH LAND AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE

a) Playing Fields -

Copies of the 31st December 2002 Playing Fields accounts were circulated to all members. Mr Aldridge advised that following the field vandalism, the picnic benches will now be fitted into new concrete bases which is likely to use the residual grant funding. The Chairman thanked him for all his contribution over the years. Mr Street drew attention for the need to re-turf the goal mouth areas and Mr Aldridge confirmed it was being arranged. It was also confirmed that a caretaker was being sought to look after the field, on a paid basis. The Clerk advised that he had received a telephone call from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister advising that there was not time for the byelaws to be included in the current rescinding Order. It was proposed by Mr Copeland,

seconded by Mr Mansfield and resolved unanimously to retain the existing byelaws. Details of a Sussex Village Hall Conference was also advised.

b) Bus Shelters and Notice Boards -

The Clerk confirmed he had written to WSCC to ascertain the ownership of 2 benches located at Cootes Lane and Cedar Court and had further requested the reinstatement of the bench at the junction of Lane End Road/Elmer Road.

9. CORRESPONDENCE

The following items had been received:-

1. Arun in Bloom Competition 2003
2. Sussex Heritage Awards 2003
3. Calor Sussex Village of the Year 2003
4. WSCC Sounding Exercise – Elected Regional Assembly

10. FINANCE COMMITTEE

a) Bank Accounts -

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

Current Account	£ 1,250.00
Business Reserve	£20,434.69
Total	<u>£21,684.69</u>

(b) Accounts for payment -

The following payments were approved nem.con and made:

(i) Arun District Council (Car Park contribution)	£1,728.00
(ii) Canon (photocopier rental)	£ 69.07
(iii) Regis 2000 (Goalposts)	£ 50.00
(iv) M Copeland (transport of goalposts)	£ 30.00
(v) Sussex Associations of Local Councils (Subscription)	£ 902.28
Total	<u>£2,779.35</u>

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mr Street wished the council well for the future. Mr Copeland thanked everyone especially Mr Aldridge. Mr Janes thanked everyone and said he had enjoyed his time on the council. Mr Chandler thanked the Chairman and the Clerk. The Chairman thanked Messrs Aldridge, Hills, Janes and Street for their efforts and said they will be missed from the council.

16. PUBLIC DISCUSSION PERIOD

It was suggested that the residents of Kingfisher Court would be appreciative if the goalposts could be moved further away from their homes. Mr Wilkinson was concerned about vandalism, particularly around the Church Hall on Good Friday and the slow response of the police. Mrs Brown complained that the rubbish bin in the children's play area and the dog bins were not being emptied. Mrs Mulvaney supported Mr Wilkinson's comments and thanked the council for placing notices in the Elmer Beach Post Office. She also supported concept of a natural island in the pond

There being no further business the Chairman reminded members that the next Meeting would be held on 15th May 2003 **at 6.30 p.m.** and the Meeting closed at 7.52 pm.