

**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 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2005**

**PRESENT** – Councillors Wotherspoon (Chairman), Aldridge, Chandler, Edey, Mrs Farley, Jeffrey, Mrs Mills, Mrs Ross, the Clerk, District Councillor Mrs Oakley, County Councillor Mrs Freeman and Mr Morrison.

- 1. APOLOGIES** – Councillors Copeland, Mansfield, Wilkinson and Mrs Willis.
- 2. MINUTES** –The Minutes of both the Annual Parish Council Meeting and the Annual Parish Meeting held on the 26<sup>th</sup> May 2005 having been circulated were approved and signed.
- 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** – Mrs Ross declared a personal interest in Item 5e being a member of the Middleton-on-Sea Association. Councillors Wotherspoon, Aldridge, Chandler, Edey, Mrs Farley, Jeffrey, Mrs Mills, Mrs Ross each declared a personal interest in Item 7 (i) being customers of Middleton Pharmacy.
- 4 ITEMS not otherwise on the Agenda but which the Chairman considered to be matter of urgency due to special circumstances** – There were none.

**5. MATTERS ARISING**

**a) Standards Committee, Local Determination Hearing, 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2005 – Councillor Mansfield**

The Clerk reported that papers had been circulated to members on 10 & 17<sup>th</sup> June 2005 and that members of the public present had been provided with a copy of the “Notice of Local Determination – Summary of Decision Notice” issued by the Solicitor to Arun District and Monitoring Officer dated 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2005. This summary had also been published in the West Sussex Gazette on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2005. Succinctly, a total of 6 allegations were made against Cllr Mansfield regarding his apparent non-declaration of interests on 6 different occasions and the hearing was conducted in his absence notwithstanding that the meeting date had been changed at his request. All 6 allegations were proven and the sanction imposed was Cllr Mansfield’s suspension from the Parish Council for 3 months in respect of each allegation, to run concurrently. However, if he submitted a letter of apology to the Parish Council and underwent training with the Monitoring Officer then his suspension would be lifted. A letter of apology was received on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2005 and the Monitoring Officer confirmed Cllr Mansfield had completed 1.5 hours of training so his suspension was lifted, 12 days after being imposed.

The Chairman advised that he had received a telephone call from the Chairman of the Standards Committee who said that what happened to Cllr Mansfield was no reflection on the other councillors, or the Parish Council which was highly regarded.

Mrs Mills stated that those who had read the case papers, which are now in the public domain, will have noted that Cllr Mansfield had accused her of manufacturing evidence (*Page 143*). Mrs Mills said her evidence was corroborated by Cllr Wilkinson who also provided an independent statement to the Standards Board following their specific request. Mrs Mills said that she wished to publicly and categorically refute the allegations made by Cllr Mansfield. Furthermore, if Cllr Mansfield is at all genuine about his apology to the Parish Council then she asked that he retracts this accusation and provides her with a written apology. Mrs Mills stated she was asking for this retraction and written apology following receipt of advice from Mrs Ashenden-Bax, Solicitor and Monitoring Officer who said such a request should be minuted. Mrs Mills proposed that the Clerk should be instructed to write to Cllr Mansfield formally requesting that Cllr Mansfield provides a written apology to Mrs Mills. This was seconded by Mrs Ross and unanimously agreed. The Clerk was instructed accordingly.

**b) Off Site Play Provision – Willowbrook S106 funds**

The Clerk reported that a response had been received from Arun District Council advising that a report was currently being prepared to allow the allocation of a number of S106 sums of money and when finalised it will be submitted to the cabinet member. The Clerk was instructed to keep this item on the Agenda.

**c) County Local Committees**

On 17<sup>th</sup> June 2005, WSCC advised that it had taken the decision that this Parish Council should form part of the Western Arun Area Committee (WAAC). This conflicted with the Parish Council's decision to seek membership of the Joint Downland Area Committee (JDAC), however, it follows JDAC's resolution, on 4<sup>th</sup> April, to oppose this Parish Council's membership, a meeting which County Councillor Mrs Freeman was unable to attend. Mrs Freeman said she had taken advice from the County Secretary and the decision could be revisited in 12 months time, if necessary. Members agreed, nem.con, to become members of WAAC, retaining the option of a review in 12 months time. The next meeting of WAAC is being held on 19<sup>th</sup> July and the Clerk was instructed to place Comet Corner on the Agenda.

**d) Comet Corner**

Mrs Mills thanked the Clerk for preparing a paper for members regarding the options available, given that the decision was well overdue. Mrs Freeman said she had some bad news and advised that she had received a telephone call from Lt. Col. Tex Pemberton, WSCC Cabinet Member for Highways, the previous evening advising that junction improvements could not proceed due to the estimated costs. The costing was apparently delayed owing to the late completion of a utilities survey, however, it had now been received and the anticipated cost of installing traffic lights will be £1.2 million or £1.45 million for a roundabout. As an interim measure, vehicle activated signs were being installed. Mrs Freeman urged the Parish Council to consider asking Lt. Col. Pemberton to come to either speak to the Parish Council or to a public meeting. The Chairman was critical about the timing of the announcement, noting that a decision had been deferred until after the County Council Elections on 5<sup>th</sup> May, notwithstanding the original decision was promised in March. He suggested consideration of the proposal put forward at the

Annual Parish Meeting that a group of Parish Councils could precept funds for junction improvements which may force WSCC's hand. District Councillor Mrs Oakley urged Mrs Freeman to obtain copies of the detailed costings and ascertain why the costs of the proposed works were so much higher than anticipated. After some discussion it was agreed to refer the matter to the General Purposes Committee meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> July.

**e) Seaweed**

Mrs Ross drew attention to significant local concerns about the fetid and putrescent seaweed which had been deposited on the beach as the hydrogen sulphide gas being emitted may have adverse health effects. The matter was discussed in detail at the MOS Association AGM. Subsequently the Association's Secretary met Arun District Council's Head of Environmental Health at the beach to discuss the options. ADC are hoping that the high tide on 24<sup>th</sup> June will wash the seaweed away, however, should that not occur then ADC will remove some of the localised concentrations of seaweed. The Chairman reminded members that there were similar problems some 10 years ago and that a Seaweed Working Group was established which met regularly and took appropriate action. The Group was finally disbanded on 15<sup>th</sup> February 1999. He said re-establishing the Group may be an option but in the interim it was agreed to refer the matter to the General Purposes Committee.

**f) Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005**

A letter from Defra was circulated to members regarding the new Act which received Royal Assent on 7<sup>th</sup> April. Parts of the Act came into force on 7<sup>th</sup> June albeit the majority of measures are not established until spring 2006. The Act provides powers to Parish Councils to issue Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) for litter, graffiti, fly-posting and dog fouling. If adopted, the Parish Council is expected to prosecute those individuals who do not pay the FPN. The Chairman commented that there was no budget for litigation and that the Finance Committee may wish to consider the position when next year's budget is being drawn up.

**6. DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE**

Copies of the minutes dated 1<sup>st</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> June 2005 had been circulated to members and were noted.

**7. GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

**i) Countryside and the Environment Advisory Sub Committee**

The Clerk advised:

- (a) It was understood that Viridor had retained a QC for advice regarding the proposed Ford Material Recycling Facility and his recommendation was to lodge an appeal. Viridor is considering their position and is in further discussions with WSCC. Further, China is now very active in the recycleables market and it is becoming attractive for WSCC to ship such waste to China via Southampton. There are obvious implications on the road network, in particular the proposed Bognor Regis Relief Road.
- (b) A resident of Middleton Road had raised objections to the red waste container stored adjacent to Middleton Pharmacy and asked the Parish Council take action

- to have it removed. The Clerk said he had visited the pharmacy and as there was no other storage site available he suggested no action was taken. This was agreed, nem.con, and the Clerk was instructed to write accordingly.
- (c) A response had been received from WSCC regarding the renewal of the Village Green and Pond Management Agreement. This will be referred to the General Purposes Committee.

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

Details of the Environment Agency's Catchment Flood Management Plans were circulated to members together with details of the Stakeholder Meeting being held on 23<sup>rd</sup> June. Elmer Sands Ltd were also advised as the Management Plan may impact on the Ryebank Rife.

**iii) Liaison Advisory Sub Committee**

The Clerk advised:

- (a) Three enquiries had been received regarding the vacant Middleton News Co-ordinator's position although nobody had applied for the job. The Chairman suggested members may know individuals who could be interested in the role and may wish to approach them. Mr Chandler said he would approach someone who may be interested in the role. The matter was referred to the General Purposes Committee.
- (b) The Safer Communities May Highlight Report was circulated to members.
- (c) The Western Area Partnership Panel minutes were circulated to members.
- (d) Details of Arun District Council's Chairman and Vice Chairman were circulated to members.

The Chairman reported that he had attended the Bognor Police Sector Neighbourhood Watch Association Annual General Meeting as the guest of Mr Morrison whom he thanked for the invitation. He said it was a very interesting meeting and asked the Clerk to circulate the associated papers.

**iv) Projects Advisory Sub Committee**

Nothing to report.

**v) Roads & Transport Advisory Sub Committee**

- a) The Clerk reported that Annette Denby, Safer Communities Co-ordinator, wished to make a presentation about the benefits of Speedwatch at July's meeting. After some discussion it was agreed that she could make the presentation and the Clerk was instructed to publicise the event to the public.
- b) WSCC have advised that if the Parish Council wish to use the SID (Speed Indicator Device) there will be a charge of £50 per half-day except where the site has been recommended by the Sussex Camera Partnership. It has been ascertained that Elmer Road is such a site.
- c) A copy of a Unity letter to the Planning Inspectorate was circulated to members. A Unity meeting was held on 15<sup>th</sup> June, however, the Parish Council representatives were unable to attend owing to prior commitments.

## 8. PARISH LAND AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE

The Clerk advised:

- (a) Following agreement at May's meeting that the PCSOs could use the Pavilion for their rest breaks it was noted that they proposed to hold a surgery in the pavilion. Following reference to the Trustees, the Police were advised that this was not permitted and the surgery was transferred to Felpham.
- (b) The audited Playing Field Management Accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2004 were circulated to members.

## 9. CORRESPONDENCE

The following items had been received:-

1. Age Concern – Money Maze Service
2. Mr A L Rainger – Letter/response (*circulated to members*)
3. Conservation Area Advisory Committee – Application Form 2005 Awards
4. Elmer Sands Newsletter
5. Middleton LAT - email
6. T Rees - email

## 10. FINANCE COMMITTEE

### a) Bank Accounts -

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

Current Account	£ 1,250.00
Business Reserve	£32,458.21
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>£33,708.21</u></b>

### (b) Accounts for payment -

The following payments were approved nem.con and made:

(i) BR Town Council – Concert sponsorship ( <i>Cheque issued 1.6.05</i> )	£ 150.00
(ii) D Fradgley – Middleton Green tree audit	£ 65.00
(iii) SPP – Newsletter setting/printing	£1,640.00
(iv) D Allsopp – Clerk's quarterly fee and expenses	£2,684.70
(v) D Allsopp – Quarterly postages/telephone calls	£ 59.71
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>£4,599.41</u></b>

## 11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mr Jeffrey supported the idea of advertising the Speedwatch presentation. District Councillor Mrs Oakley said she was dealing with a complaint about overgrown grass in the church yard. She further congratulated Pauline Allsopp on the production of a taped version of Middleton News which she had recently listened to and was most impressed.

## **12. PUBLIC DISCUSSION PERIOD**

Mrs Mulvany reported that a directional sign in Middleton Road was obscured by tree branches. The Clerk was instructed to advise WSCC Highways. She also enquired whether the red waste bin at Middleton Pharmacy could be painted a less conspicuous colour but was advised this was not possible. The Rev Brown enquired when the Vehicle Activated Signs at Comet Corner will be installed and asked why the speed limit cannot be reduced to 40 mph, as it is at the Oyster Catcher. County Councillor Mrs Freeman said she would make enquires.

**There** being no further business the Chairman reminded members that the next Meeting will be held on 28<sup>th</sup> July **at 6.30 p.m.** and the Meeting closed at 7.42 p.m.