

MIDDLETON-ON-SEA PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
Held in the back of Jubilee Hall, Elmer Road, Middleton-on-Sea
On Wednesday 16th September 2009

PRESENT – Councillors Wotherspoon (Chairman), Copeland, Jeffrey, Mansfield, Mrs Mills, the Clerk, District Councillor Mrs Oakley and County Councillor Mrs Coleman.

1. **APOLOGIES** – Councillors Gamester, Mrs Hall, and Mrs Haywood. Also PCSO Morge and Norman Morrison.
2. **MINUTES** –The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 15th July 2009 having been circulated were approved and signed.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr Wotherspoon declared an interest in item 6(g) being the Parish Council Chairman. Councillors Copeland, Jeffrey and Wotherspoon each declared a personal interest in item 6(f) being deliverers of Middleton News. Mr Mansfield declared a prejudicial interest in item 6(j) being a nearby resident.

4. PUBLIC DISCUSSION PERIOD

Mr Brookland said that the seat in Middleton Road, adjacent to Sea Lane, still needed cleaning and that the planter still needed tidying up. Mr Mansfield confirmed he had cleaned the seat and the Clerk said the planter would be discussed under item 8(iv). The Chairman said that following the vandalism meeting on 2nd September he had made arrangements for Arun District Council's contractors to reduce the height of the hedge between the toilets and the village hall to fence height.

5. ITEMS not otherwise on the Agenda but which the Chairman considered to be a matter of urgency due to special circumstances – There were none.

6. MATTERS ARISING

a) Co-option of three Parish Councillors

The Clerk referred members to the co-option meeting note, dated 19th August 2009, and advised that the District Council had given approval to co-opt a third councillor. Mr Mansfield proposed the co-option of the three councillors and this was seconded by Mrs Mills and approved by an overwhelming majority. The Clerk advised that Mrs Phillips had given her apologies and will attend the 21st October meeting to be co-opted. Mrs Claxton and Mr Watson each signed their Declaration of Acceptance of Office together with their Written Undertaking to Observe a Council Code of Conduct. Each document was witnessed by the Clerk. The Chairman welcomed Mrs Claxton and Mr Watson as new councillors. The Clerk will advise Arun District Council accordingly.

b) Vacancy - Councillor representative to the Jubilee Hall Committee

Mr Copeland said he will be prepared to undertake the role. He was proposed by Mr Jeffrey, seconded by Mrs Claxton and approved by an overwhelming majority. The Clerk will write to the Jubilee Hall Committee.

c) Vacancy - Councillor to join the Development Control Committee

Mrs Claxton said she will be prepared to undertake the role and this was unanimously agreed.

d) Sea Lane/Manor House Trees

In item 8(i) of the 15th July 2009 Parish Council meeting, an email from Mrs Martin, Chairman, Middleton-on-Sea Association was read by the Clerk which stated, inter alia, that Mr & Mrs Haywood had been asked by WSCC Highways to prune some of their trees. Mrs Haywood, in a written statement, indicated that the email was totally incorrect. In the days after the meeting, the Clerk provided Mrs Martin with some copy emails and precise details of the trees which required cutting back by WSCC Highways, which were located at the northern end of Middleton Green, adjacent to Middleton Road. Mrs Martin has accepted that Mrs Haywood's statement is accurate and that her assumption was based on a reasonable interpretation of imprecisely worded WSCC Highways emails.

e) Arun Health & Wellbeing/Action Planning workshop – 4th November 2009

Details of the workshop were circulated to members, however, no one was able to attend.

f) Middleton News – Christmas vouchers

The Clerk sought approval to purchase Threshers vouchers up to the total value of £220 to give to the deliverers of Middleton News, as in previous years. This was proposed by Mrs Mills, seconded by Mr Mansfield and agreed with an overwhelming majority. Mr Jeffrey confirmed he did not require a voucher.

g) Ted Chandler's reception – Wednesday 30th September 2009

The Clerk advised that a reception was being organised on 30th September to celebrate Ted Chandler's 38 years as a member of the Parish Council, over 25 years of which was spent as Chairman. It was felt that the reception was a proper recognition of Mr Chandler's service to the community and some 45 local guests have been invited. The cost of the reception is anticipated to be no more than £500 and will be paid for by the Chairman using his Chairman's allowance. However, in view of this exceptional expenditure it was proposed to increase the Chairman's Allowance by up to £500, supported by receipts, to cover the expenditure of the reception. This was proposed by Mrs Mills, seconded by Mr Copeland and approved by an overwhelming majority. The Chairman explained that he had discussed a presentation with Ted Chandler and he would like a photograph of all the guests with a plaque underneath. The Chairman wondered if something else should be presented at the reception and Mr Copeland agreed to investigate whether it was possible to purchase a suitable badge for the occasion.

h) Surcharge of Foul Water Elmer

The Clerk attended a meeting on 10th September at The Hard together with District Councillor Barbara Oakley, Linda Smith, Geoff Matcham and Ian McCarthney (Chairman Elmer Sands Ltd) to discuss the ongoing issues with the surcharging of foul water on the Elmer Sands Estate. It was agreed that the Clerk would provide ESL with details of foul water surcharges across the parish which have previously been discussed with Southern Water. District Councillor Barbara Oakley agreed to explore the options available at the District Council, through the Chief Executive, to put pressure on Southern Water and OFWAT, however, at the end of the day the issue will be money. Nick Gibb MP is also now to re-engage with the issue. ESL will continue to have the lead on this matter, following their official complaint to OFWAT, so the Parish Council role will remain as a facilitator. The Clerk has also written to the Assistant Director of Planning Services, again, to ascertain the size and start date of the planning “temporary embargo” area and a response is awaited.

i) Vandalism meeting 2nd September 2009

The meeting was attended by representatives of the Parish Council, Middleton-on-Sea Playing Fields, Jubilee Hall Management Committee, Middleton Scouts, Middleton Medical Centre and PCSO Clive Morge. A very full discussion took place regarding the problems of anti social behaviour and the remedies to it. It was decided that the introduction of a CCTV system, costing some £11,500, was most appropriate and two grant applications have been made to JWAAC (£8,000) and ADC Village Enhancement (£1,000). Both applications will be considered at the JWAAC meeting on 4th November and the Parish Council is committed to support the scheme with up to £3,000, contingent on the grants being approved.

j) Alleged noise at Guernsey Farm events

Before the item was discussed, the Chairman made a statement to advise that he could not take part in the discussions because of his role as a Cabinet Member at Arun District Council. (Should legal action be required in respect of noise it will be his role to sanction legal proceedings and he must remain impartial). He said he will listen but will take no part in the debate, or vote. District Councillor Barbara Oakley said that she was in a similar position.

The Clerk advised that following receipt of written representations from a parishioner regarding alleged loud noise late into the night on 29th August 2009 at Guernsey Farm, the Clerk wrote to the Chief Executive, West Sussex County Council. An earlier letter had been sent on 9th July regarding another alleged incident on the 4th/5th July. The Chief Executive responded on 14th September to advise that the County Council had served formal notice on Mr Gibbs informing him that he is in breach of his tenancy agreement and that entertainment activity is to cease on the holding. Because of the terms of the tenancy agreement, Mr Gibbs had to be given one month to desist from these activities. County Councillor Mrs Christina Coleman said WSCC had moved quickly on the matter, with the first letter being written on 9th July 2009.

Mr Mansfield left the meeting whilst this item was discussed.

7. DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

Copies of the minutes dated 19th August and 2nd September 2009 were circulated and noted.

8. GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

i) Countryside and the Environment Advisory Sub Committee

Mr Mansfield said that the pond has little water in it and that whilst the Clerk was on holiday he approached Portsmouth Water (PW) with a request that the pond should be topped up. He was referred to the WSCC Fire and Rescue Service who advised that they were unable to top up the pond because of a new directive issued by PW. A subsequent request by the Clerk to PW was also turned down and it is understood that a Bersted Parish Council's request was also declined. County Councillor Mike Coleman said Pagham Parish Council had requested their pond to be filled and that was being done, but only because it is populated with fish which will die if it is not topped up.

Mr Mansfield requested approval to spend £50 on a gardener to clear up the northern end of Middleton Green and this was approved.

Mr Copeland suggested that the question of allotments should be re-examined. Mr Mansfield reminded him that when this was last examined it was resolved "*Not to take a decision until the criteria are met*" (20th December 2006) and suggested that a better way forward was garden sharing whereby elderly people with large gardens could permit other people who wished to grow vegetables into their gardens. A sort of "Garden Buddy" scheme. District Councillor Mrs Oakley raised concerns about insurance. The Clerk reminded members that the matter was dropped last time because of the cost of purchasing the land, which can only be financed via a Public Works Loan, the cost of which will increase the precept substantially. The other issue will be who will manage the allotments. Mr Copeland said the matter can only be progressed if a committee of allotment holders can manage the allotments with the Parish Council not being involved. County Councillor Mrs Christina Coleman said she will ask WSCC Strategic Environment to look at the options and report back. Mr Mansfield said nothing should be done until sufficient applications are received.

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

The Environment Agency has provided a 1:15,000 scale flood map for the parish.

(iii) Liaison Advisory Sub Committee

Nothing to report.

iv) Projects Advisory Sub Committee

The Clerk reported that Bishop Tufnell Junior School is to take over the maintenance of the planter in Elmer Road with immediate effect. They intend to clear the planter before winter and maintain it during the winter. In the spring they propose to plant it as a seaside garden, with a shingle top to reduce maintenance. Arun District Council has provided them with £250 to purchase plants. Their other idea is to paint a seaside mural on the toilet block wall, with the assistance of a local artist, however, this did not find much support amongst the members who were concerned that it might attract graffiti. Mr

Copeland said that Joan Phillips was an artist and that she might be the right person to become involved.

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

A letter from WSCC Fire and Rescue Service advises that they now have two Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) which are available for periods of one/two weeks but that the operators must have public liability insurance of £10 million. Currently, PCSO Clive Morge operates the SIDs in the parish, sending letters to speeding motorists, where appropriate.

The Clerk also advised that he is chasing up the replacement “Free Car Park” sign together with a failed flood light on the zebra crossing. County Councillor Mrs Christina Coleman undertook to chase these up with Tracey Webb, WSCC Highways.

9. PARISH LAND AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE

The Clerk reported that more curry/takeaways had been thrown over the play equipment in the playground and that the Field Warden has the unenviable job of clearing up the mess.

10. CORRESPONDENCE

The following items had been received:-

- (1) Action in Rural Sussex – AGM 6th November 2009
- (2) Action in Rural Sussex – Newsletter
- (3) Anonymous letter relating to Sea Lane Estate
- (4) Arun District Council – Financial Position & working with Parish Councils
- (5) Arun District Council – Options for Growth Public Consultation
- (6) Arun District Council – Training Update (16th September 2009)
- (7) Clerks and Councils Direct
- (8) Elmer Sands Petition/Report (*General Circulation & Chairman*)
- (9) Middleton-on-Sea Assn – Response to Arun/Pagham draft flood strategy
- (10) OFWAT – Letter to Elmer Sands Ltd
- (11) Saturday Venture Association – Promotional letter
- (12) West Sussex Public Partnership Forum - Newsletter

11. FINANCE COMMITTEE

a) **Bank Accounts -**

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

Current Account	£ 1,250.00
Business Reserve	£34,945.54
Total	<u>£36,195.54</u>

(b) Accounts for payment -

The following payments were approved nem.con and made:

(1) Mazars (External Auditors)	£ 460.00
(3) Admor Ltd (Setting/Printing Middleton News)	£ 1,590.00
(4) Andrew Houlden (Newsletter Co-ordinator)	£ 566.41
(5) Mrs P Allsopp (Newsletter Distribution)	£ 50.00
(6) D F Allsopp (Quarterly Clerk's fee)	£ 3,035.97
(7) D F Allsopp (Quarterly office expenses)	£ 172.20
(8) D F Allsopp (Web hosting)	£ 12.00
Total	£ 5,886.58

(c) Parish Council 2008/2009 Audited Annual Accounts

A clean external audit certificate has been received for the 2008/2009 accounts.

12 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mrs Mills sought clarification about the action being taken at WSCC Strategic Environment.

County Councillor Christina Coleman said it was a brilliant Middleton News and that she was appalled at the actions of some motorists on the zebra crossing. She was so concerned that she had spoken to the Chairman of the Sussex Police Authority and the Chief Constable which resulted in increased patrols and enforcement on the crossing.

County Councillor Mike Coleman said it was not just a Middleton problem but that the latest JWAAC meeting had received the most effective response from the police for sometime and that the police were now enforcing the Highway Code.

County Councillor Christina Coleman mentioned that there is a meeting on 17th September at the Greensward, Climping Church to discuss illegal parking and prevention of gypsies and travellers stopping on the site.

District Councillor Mrs Oakley said that sadly a number of zebra crossing offenders were local residents. She also flagged up an increase in flyposting in Middleton.

There being no further business the Chairman reminded members that the next Meeting will be held on **21st October 2009 at 7.00 p.m.** The meeting closed at 8.35 p.m.