

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 27th November 2003

PRESENT – Councillors Wotherspoon (Chairman), Aldridge, Chandler, Copeland, Mrs Farley, Jarvis, Mansfield, Mrs Mills, Mrs Ross, Wilkinson, Mrs Willis, the Clerk, and District Councillor Mrs B Oakley.

1. APOLOGIES - County Councillor Mrs C Freeman and Mr Morrison

2. MINUTES – The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 23rd October 2003 having been circulated were approved and signed.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – Mr Mansfield declared a personal interest in Item 7(iv)(a) and in item 5(d) being a near-by resident and a volunteer at Amberley Museum respectively. Mr Wilkinson declared a personal interest in item 8(a) and item 11 being both a near-by resident and member of the church. Mr Copeland declared a personal interest in item 11 being a member of the church.

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) Councillors' Allowances -

Following some discussion it was proposed by Mr Chandler, seconded by Mrs Farley and resolved by a majority to opt out of a Councillor's Allowance, adopt the Arun District Parish Remuneration Panel's proposal to pay Travel Allowance to elected Members at the recommended rate of 40p per mile (The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) Regulations 2003) and to retain the Chairman's Allowance at its present level of £250 per annum (LGA1976, s15). Members were reminded by the Chairman to check with their individual motor vehicle insurer to confirm that their insurance covered them for use on Parish Council business. The Clerk was instructed to display the appropriate public notices.

b) Wreath laying – Ford Memorial -

The Clerk advised that he had obtained a wreath from the Royal British Legion, Arundel and that it was laid on behalf of the Parish Council by Mr B. Hills who reported the largest attendance at the Remembrance Service since the memorial was laid. Mr Hills requested that the Parish Council provide a wreath (cost £25) annually. That was proposed by Mr Chandler, seconded by Mrs Ross and agreed by an overwhelming majority.

c) Felpham Site 6 Development Brief and Public Consultation

The Clerk reported that Councillor Holman (Felpham Parish Council) had established contact in response to the Parish Council's letter. Felpham Parish Council requested that letters should be written to Mr Sumnall (Arun District Council), Mr Downy (WSCC) and

Mr Waight (WSCC Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Environment) requesting that the Northern Relief Road is built when the first of the following options occurs: (a) a given start date, or (b) when a specified number of houses have been constructed. Councillor Holman also invited a Member to attend the Advisory Working Group meeting on 4th December 2003 and offered to provide copies of the meeting notes from the recently reconvened Site 6 Advisory Group. The Clerk was instructed to write to the suggested individuals and to request copies of the meeting notes.

d) Refurbishment of Fingerpost signs

The Clerk reported that he had not received a response from Amberley Museum to his letter. Mr Mansfield advised that a response/quotation was on its way and that the Museum will be very happy to undertake the refurbishment. The fingerposts will be refurbished at Amberley and the cast iron post will be refurbished in situ.

e) Circulation of Sub-Committee minutes

Mrs Mills proposed and Mr Wilkinson seconded a proposal that copies of all Sub-Committee minutes should be circulated to all Members to save time and repetition at the Full Council meeting. The proposal was passed with an overwhelming majority, with one abstention.

6. DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

The Clerk advised that there had been 2 Committee meetings, since the last full Council meeting, at which 3 plans had been considered. No objections had been raised. Mr Mansfield enquired whether Mr Wilkinson had declared a prejudicial interest for M/111/03. Mr Wilkinson advised he had declared a personal interest which he considered appropriate. The Chairman stated that the issue of declaring interests was complex and that Members should seek appropriate advice from their solicitor or the Clerk who would refer the matter to the Solicitor & Monitoring Office at Arun District Council.

7. GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

The Clerk reported that the PCC of St Nicholas' Church were delighted to be invited to have a non-voting representative co-opted onto the General Purposes Committee and that Mary Bourne (Church Warden) will be their representative.

i) Countryside and the Environment Advisory Sub Committee

a) Country Park -

Nothing to report.

b) Footpaths -

A member of the public reported that public footpath161 was a 'bit of an eyesore' with a lot of rubbish building up. This was reported to Arun District Council and Mrs Ross advised that it had now been cleaned up. WSCC advised that routine maintenance had been completed on the footpaths and that they will be revisited in 9 months time.

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

A member of the public reported that the bus shelter adjacent to Merry End was full of litter and beer cans and concern was expressed that someone may be living in the shelter. The Clerk visited the shelter, confirmed nobody was in residence, and requested Arun District Council to clean the shelter, which has been completed. Mrs Ross said the bus shelter was used as a meeting place for youths. A letter was received from the

Environmental Health department regarding alleged noise nuisance at Brambles, Yapton Road. The Clerk was instructed to refer the letter to the Development Control Committee.

d) Tree planting –

Mr Mansfield advised that he was liaising with the contractors regarding the planting of 15 trees albeit this had been delayed owing to the mild weather. He hoped they would be planted in the next few weeks.

e) Village Pond -

Mrs Willis advised that the annual clearance of the village pond & green will be undertaken on 6th December. 100 common reeds have been ordered and these will be planted on the same day in the drainage gully between the pond and Middleton Road to act as an environmentally friendly filter system.

ii) Joint Sea Defence and Land Drainage Advisory Sub Committee

A response from Elliott Morley MP, Minister for Environment and Agri-Environment, Defra relating to sea defences on the Greensward was circulated to all Members. A meeting between Nick Gibb MP, Mrs Willis, the Clerk and Arun District Council officers had been arranged for 28th November to seek to progress the issue. Mrs Willis said that both Mrs Oakley and Prof. Alan Johns had given some input for the meeting. Mr Wilkinson reminded the meeting that a Public Right of Way along the Greensward was also affected. A letter from MOS Association enclosing a copy letter to Arun District Council titled 'Coast Protection' had also been received.

iii) Liaison Advisory Sub Committee

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

A letter was received from the Empty Homes Officer, Arun District Council.

b) Newsletter -

The Clerk reported that the December edition of Middleton News will be a bumper 16 page (usually 12 page) colour edition and that the additional cost had been covered by additional advertising revenue. The Newsletter will be available on 11 December.

c) Police Panel and Police Liaison -

The Clerk advised that he had emailed Insp Darge following two arson related incidents on 10th and 24th October and had received a response that Community Support Officers (CSO) will be asked to patrol the area when they are on lates. Mr Copeland advised that both incidents occurred on Friday evenings. The Clerk reported that there was a suggestion that a CSO could be 'bought' by the parish. The Clerk was instructed to investigate this.

d) Residents Association Committee –

Mr Copeland advised that the next meeting was on 8th December 2003.

e) Vital Villages Scheme -

A letter was received from the Countryside Agency seeking to reassure the Parish Council that despite the 'Rural Delivery Review' that this will not affect the current Vital Villages grant. Mr Copeland advised that the Action Group met on 24th November and that the questionnaire prize winners were drawn (Mrs Bettina Sands £100 and Nick Woodward £20). Questionnaires are now being processed and the Group are working towards a final report, scheduled for March 2004.

f) Young People –

This is being placed on hold until the questionnaire results have been formulated.

iv) Roads & Transport Advisory Sub Committee

a) Comet Corner

The Clerk reported that:

- a) WSCC had given Public Notice for a 50 mph speed limit for a 735 metre stretch of the A259 straddling its junction with the B2132. The closing date for comments is 28th November.
- b) WSCC issued a Press Release on 28th October relating to the feasibility study being undertaken at Comet Corner.
- c) The Clerk attended the Bognor Regis Urban Transport Plan Forum on 11th November and obtained answers to 2 questions placed on the Agenda at the request of the General Purposes Committee. In particular, traffic growth projections for Comet Corner for the 20 years (2001-2021), in a worst case scenario, is 86% of which at least 15% will be created by the Northern Relief Road. The road is presently used by an estimated 22,000 vehicles per day so by 2021 it can be extrapolated that this will increase to an estimated 40,000 vehicles per day. The next meeting will be in March 2004.

Mrs Mills said that in order to clarify the Parish Council's position on Comet Corner, so that it cannot be misinterpreted in the future, she proposed the following resolution which was seconded by Mrs Ross and passed with an overwhelming majority. *"This Council resolves that there should be significant early improvements at the junction of the A259/B2132, known as Comet Corner. This will include either the installation of a roundabout, or traffic lights, dependent on West Sussex Council Council's analysis of the relative costs and benefits. This Council also welcomes the start of work on a feasibility study, commissioned by West Sussex County Council, designed to improve the Comet Corner junction"*.

b) Other Issues

The Clerk advised that he met WSCC's Local Traffic Engineer on 6th November to discuss possible safety improvements at the mini roundabout junction of Elmer Road, Middleton Road and Yapton Road together with the junction of Yapton Road and Sundale Lane. A written response had now been received advising that additional verge markers on the southern grass verge will be installed to break up forward visibility of southbound traffic, the Give Way Sign in Yapton Road will be removed and that give way markings will be painted at the junction of Sundale Lane & Yapton Road. Consideration will also be given to altering the large directional sign in Middleton Road to show the Sundale Lane junction in Yapton Road. The Clerk was instructed to provide Mrs Oakley with a copy of the letter.

8. PARISH LAND AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE

a) Playing Fields -

The Chairman commented that the Committee meeting due to have been held on 12th November could not proceed as it was not quorate and that it had to be rearranged for 19th November. He reminded Members to give their apologies as soon as possible if they were unable to attend a meeting to avoid a repetition of this. Mr Copeland advised that a

meeting was held on 19th September, attended by himself, Mrs Mills, 5 members of Felpham Colts and the Clerk to resolve outstanding issues. The meeting was very positive and the Colts asked that the Storage Garage should be demolished, as it is insecure, and that it is replaced by a 20 foot storage container. Revised rental payment arrangements were also concluded. At the Parish Land & Property Committee meeting, agreement was given to the demolition of the Storage Garage and installation of a 20 foot storage container subject to (a) Planning permission being obtained, if required, (b) The container being painted dark green and (c) Shrubs being planted around the container for camouflage. It was also agreed to investigate the use of security guards to patrol the area encompassing the Jubilee Hall, Pavilion, Scout Hall and Avisford Medical Centre for a trial period of 3 months. Financial contributions were being sought from all parties.

b) Bus Shelters and Notice Boards -
Nothing to report.

9. CORRESPONDENCE

The following items had been received:-

1. Arun District Council Homeless Strategy/ Homeless Forum minutes
2. Clerks & Clerks Direct newsletter
3. Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group – subscription request
4. Gravity brochure
5. J. Thomas (Southern) Ltd brochure (*placed into circulation*)
6. Local Channel brochure
7. Local Council Review
8. Local Heritage initiative newsletter
9. Regional Mineral Strategy: Consultation Draft
10. Sussex County Playing Fields Assn – AGM 1st December 2003
11. West Sussex Rural Forum Annual Conference 15th December 2003

10. FINANCE COMMITTEE

a) Bank Accounts -

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

Current Account	£ 1,250.00
Business Reserve	£31,089.47
Total	<u>£32,339.47</u>

(b) Accounts for payment -

The following payments were approved nem.con and made:

(i) Poppy Fund Appeal (wreath)	£ 25.00
(ii) Questionnaire Prize Winner (Village Action Plan)	£ 100.00
(iii) Questionnaire Prize Winner (Village Action Plan)	£ 20.00
(iv) Mazars (External Auditor's Fee)	£ 293.75
(v) Mrs R Willis (Travel expenses to SALC course)	£ 16.00
(v) British Flora (Reeds for Pond) (<i>Chq issued 19.11.03</i>)	£ 76.37
(v) Arun District Council (Plant A Bulb)	£ 35.80
(v) Elmer Builders (Installation of benches)	£ 605.00
Total	<u>£1,171.92</u>

(c) Budget requests 2004/5

The Clerk reported that the precept request must be submitted to Arun District Council by 31 January 2004 at the latest. Mr Copeland advised that the Finance Committee will be recommending a budget of £34,325 (2003/4 £29,230) which is a 17% increase over this year and also includes £2,000 of projected expenditure to improve the playground facilities, by October 2004, consistent with the requirements of the Disabilities Discrimination Act 1995. The Finance Committee is recommending a 13% increase in precept (£33,000) over the 2003/4 budget. Messrs Chandler and Mansfield indicated they wished to keep any increases to a minimum. The Chairman advised that increases in precept were not the same as increases in Council Tax bills and drew attention to the level precept this year which resulted in an actual reduction in Council Tax bills. He requested that the Clerk provide Members with both a full, and simplified budget paper similar to that provided last year. The Clerk advised that the external auditor had now completed the Audit of the 2002/3 Accounts and had issued a clean audit certificate.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.

12. PUBLIC DISCUSSION PERIOD

Mrs Mulvaney reported that some scaffolding had been erected on Manor Farm House. Father William Marston and Alan Fitzgerald (PCC and Church Planning Committee member), supported by members of the church, both spoke regarding the plans for the proposed extension to St Nicholas' Church which were recently withdrawn by the Church following 3 objections, one of which was the Parish Council's Development Control Committee. It was stated that Church had been built in 1849 and its seating capacity was inadequate for the present day with some church members staying away owing to the cramped conditions. There were also problems accommodating disabled people. A quinquennial inspection of the church hall revealed that much renovation work was required so it was decided to seek the demolition of the hall and build the new extension which would accommodate 200 worshippers as well as provide a meeting room. The flat roof design had been proposed as it was felt that a high roof line would compete with the local scene. A full discussion took place which included Mr Mansfield commenting that the thing that caused most concern was the flat roof and that a double pitched roof would be more acceptable. It was agreed that the aim was now to seek a way forward with new plans as it was apparent that ADC's planning officer was not supportive of the proposed design. Church representatives will therefore talk with District Council officers to find an acceptable way forward and will then speak again, on an informal basis, with the Parish Council.

13. CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS – Standing Order 63

In view of the nature of the business being transacted the public and press were excluded from this part of the meeting when a Member's statement was received.

There being no further business the Chairman reminded members that the next Meeting would be held on 18th December 2003 **at 6.30 p.m.** and the Meeting closed at 8.03 p.m.