

**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 24<sup>th</sup> November 2005**

**PRESENT** – Councillors Wotherspoon (Chairman), Copeland, Jeffrey, Mrs Mills, Mrs Ross, Wilkinson, Mrs Willis, the Clerk and District Councillor Mrs Oakley.

1. **APOLOGIES** – Councillors Chandler, Edey, Mansfield and County Councillor Mrs Freeman.
2. **MINUTES** –The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 27<sup>th</sup> October 2005 having been circulated were approved and signed.
3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** – Mr Copeland declared a personal interest in Item 13 being a distributor of Middleton News. Mrs Ross declared a personal interest in both Item 7(i) being a member of the Middleton-on-Sea Association and Item 13 being an advertiser in Middleton News. Mrs Willis declared a personal interest in Item 13 being both a friend of the parents of the Co-ordinator of Middleton News and a distributor of Middleton News.

**4. ITEMS not otherwise on the Agenda but which the Chairman considered to be matter of urgency due to special circumstances** – The Chairman advised that he had been invited to attend an Emergency Joint Meeting, at the request of Aldwick Parish Council, on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2005 to consider:

- (a) Potential closure of Public Conveniences.
- (b) Funding for Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs).

The Chairman advised that this parish was not affected by item (a) and sought members' views regarding item (b), in the knowledge that Yapton Parish Council had taken the stance that the Police, not the Parish Council, should be responsible for PCSO funding. Members unanimously supported Yapton's position and the Chairman will take that message to the Emergency Joint Meeting.

**5. MATTERS ARISING**

**a) Co-option of two Parish Councillors**

The Clerk reported that whilst the two vacancies had been advertised in Middleton News and on the three Parish Council notice boards nobody had come forward. He advised that it was not necessary to fill the positions immediately and after some discussions members resolved to leave the positions unfilled pending suitable candidates coming forward.

**b) Time limitation for the Public Discussion Period**

The Clerk circulated a briefing paper prior to the meeting confirming that whilst the public have the right to attend the meeting they may only speak if approved by the majority of councillors present. Mrs Ross said she enjoyed hearing the views of the public albeit in some cases the speeches had been excessive, going on too long and in a

repetitive manner. She further recognised that the Public Discussion Period was now reverting to the end of the meeting. She proposed that a limit of 3 minutes per person, with an overall maximum Public Discussion Period of 20 minutes and this was seconded by Mrs Willis. Mrs Mills was very keen for the public to speak and Mr Wilkinson concurred but thought the Public Discussion Period should be at the beginning of the meeting. After further discussion it was *unanimously resolved that the Public Discussion Period should be a maximum of 20 minutes long and that individual speakers will be limited to 3 minutes. Further, the overall length of the Public Discussion Period may be extended at the Chairman's discretion.*

**c) Off Site Play provision**

The Clerk confirmed that this matter had not progressed further. The Clerk was instructed to place the item on December's Agenda.

**d) Fireworks**

The Chairman requested that this item was placed on the Agenda as he was concerned that a dog bin had been destroyed by fireworks on Shrubbs Field. Further, this year fireworks had damaged roofs, cars and a swimming pool cover. He said he wished to collate the information as it was understood that the PCSOs had the matter under investigation. The Clerk advised that he had received representations from residents of Kingfisher Court who were increasingly worried by the fireworks and bonfires on Shrubbs Field close to their homes. Members also recounted damage to the Beach Huts, another swimming pool cover and moving cars. Mr Copeland said the matter had been raised with Inspector John Merrick, at the Neighbourhood Management Team meeting, who advised that fireworks can be let off up to 11 p.m. any night of the year and midnight on 5<sup>th</sup> November. He considered the law very difficult to enforce.

**e) Code of Conduct – Standards Board Advice**

The Clerk circulated a briefing paper prior to the meeting which detailed the advice received from the Standards Board for England, which was backed by case law, together with Bulletin 16 which contained details of the Court of Appeal case. The briefing paper also detailed three key issues with which a member who has a prejudicial interest must comply. The Clerk stated that it appeared that the advice provided by the Monitoring Officer was defective. After reference to the Chairman it was agreed to rely on the Standards Board's advice and restructure the meeting back to the previous format, last used on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2005. District & County Councillors had been advised accordingly.

**f) West Sussex Minerals Development Plan**

The Plan has been placed into circulation. Members noted that it did not affect this parish so it was agreed to take no action.

**g) Sale of Cars at Comet Corner**

The Chairman recalled that at the previous meeting he requested members who were concerned to maintain a log about cars being sold on the WSCC Highways verge. Most members agreed that there was nothing to report. Mr Copeland said he had raised the issue at the Neighbourhood Management Team meeting and was advised that it was not

illegal to park vehicles on WSCC Highways land. However, in view of his concerns the Police will call at the premises. It was unanimously agreed to take no further action.

**h) Comet Corner Proposed 40mph speed limit**

Details of the proposal, and associated plans, were circulated to all members prior to the meeting. Mr Copeland had concerns about the proposal and said that either traffic lights or a roundabout was needed. The reduction in the speed limit across the junction had the effect of bunching up the vehicles on the A259 which made it more difficult for cars on the B2132 to join it. As the queues on the minor roads increased so did the likelihood of drivers taking chances to pull out. Mr Wilkinson agreed and said these minor works were a delaying tactic. Mrs Mills said this issue had been raised at the Highways Meeting, held on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2005, although it had been agreed to go along with the reduced speed limit, which will reduce accident impact speeds. She recognised, however, that when bunching occurs it will highlight the need for major junction improvements. The Clerk provided details of Yapton Parish Council's position, together with WSCC Highways response, which confirmed the speed limit improvements were taken from a separate budget to that of major works improvements. The Chairman said he was supportive of the work being done at Comet Corner and was aware that residents of Elmer Sands wanted a 40 mph speed limit. Further, he was aware that Felpham Parish Council echoed the views of Mr Copeland. Finally, it was agreed to support the 40 mph speed limit, albeit raising and seeking assurances about the bunching and budgetary issues, by an overwhelming majority. The Clerk was instructed to advise WSCC Highways.

**i) JWAAC representation re Comet Corner**

The Clerk advised that at the General Purposes Committee meeting, held on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2005, it was unanimously resolved that *the Parish Council will always be represented at JWAAC meetings and that the representatives will maintain maximum pressure to ensure a speedy resolution of Comet Corner Junction improvement issues.* After some discussion it was unanimously agreed that if Mr Copeland cannot attend the JWAAC meeting that he will email other members to ensure a substitute councillor attends the JWAAC meeting.

**j) Flying Fortress youth transport grant**

Mr Jeffrey said he had visited the Flying Fortress and had met its Managing Director, Mrs Roberts, to discuss the potential for subsidising transport from Middleton and Elmer to the Flying Fortress, twice a week. His enquiries suggested that a minibus cost will be £14 for each journey so if the Flying Fortress was provided with a £300 grant over a 3 month trial period then this would represent 50% of the transport costs. It was proposed by Mr Copeland, seconded by Mrs Mills and unanimously agreed to give Agreement In Principle to providing a £300 grant to the Flying Fortress, for a 3 month period, subject to the submission by the Flying Fortress of a working paper confirming (a) how the scheme will work, (b) their acceptance of insurance liability, (c) the statistics to be provided to the Parish Council, (d) how the scheme will be publicised. The Clerk will write.

## **6. DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE**

Copies of the minutes dated 2<sup>nd</sup> November and 16<sup>th</sup> November had been circulated to members and were noted. The Clerk reported that Arun District Council's Development Control Committee had objected to the proposed Materials Reprocessing Facility at Ford (F/19/05) and that he will be representing the Parish Council at a meeting with the WSCC Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2005. WSCC Planning Committee will consider the application on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2005.

## **7. GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

Copies of the minutes dated 2<sup>nd</sup> November had been circulated to members and were noted.

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

A letter was received from Mr Eastlake asking for the Parish Council's support in respect of a Definitive Map Modification Order relating to a 986 metre grass surfaced footpath which runs parallel with footpath 829 adjacent to Poole Place. Mrs Ross proposed a letter of support is sent to WSCC and this was seconded by Mr Copeland and unanimously agreed. The Clerk was instructed to write to WSCC Legal Services.

Mrs Willis enquired who owned the western verge in Sea Lane between the entrance of Middleton Sports Club and South Walk and proposed writing to WSCC. This was seconded by Mr Jeffrey and agreed. The Clerk was instructed to write to WSCC.

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

A letter was received from Arun District Council regarding coastal defence issues. The Coastal Defence Strategy has yet to be finalised as Defra have introduced a new report format necessitating a redrafting of the report, which will be undertaken by ADC shortly. Liaison continues with the Environment Agency and discussions regarding the import of shingle to nourish the beach behind the islands at Elmer have recently taken place. The scheme at Middleton (Sea Lane) is still unlikely to proceed in the near future, given its low priority score. Finally, it is confirmed that general beach monitoring is being undertaken both on foot and with quarterly aerial flights. The Clerk was instructed to send a copy of the letter to the Middleton-on-Sea Association.

A copy letter, addressed to Middleton-on-Sea Association, from Mr Waters was read by the Clerk indicating that he was awaiting Arun District Council completing their survey before he can liaise with them.

### **(iii) Liaison Advisory Sub Committee**

The Clerk advised:

- (a) Receipt of a letter from Sussex Police acknowledging the Parish Council's letter regarding Inspector Darge.
- (b) Joe Edwards has been appointed Chief Constable of Sussex with effect from February 2006. He was previously Deputy Chief Constable of the Force for 3 years.
- (c) A joint letter from Sussex Police and SALC regarding the funding of PCSOs had been circulated to members.

- (d) The Sussex and Surrey Associations of Local Councils' autumn newsletter, together details of their advanced training course for councillors, had been circulated to members.

Mr Wilkinson advised that he had represented the Parish Council at the Annual General Meetings of both Action in Rural Sussex and SALC. He provided a very full and detailed report about proceedings and items of interest, which highlighted that SALC was going through a funding crisis owing to high expenditure. The subscription rate is going to be revised, possibly based on the amount of usage of SALC's facilities. Overall, he said it was a good meeting which provided a lot of information. The Chairman thanked him for representing the Parish Council.

**iv) Projects Advisory Sub Committee**

The Clerk advised that a £5,000 invoice representing the Parish Council's contribution to the Larksfield Skate Park had been received. Once paid, the Clerk will lodge a request for the £2,500 CDRP grant.

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

The Clerk confirmed:

- (a) A meeting had been arranged with WSCC's Road Safety Community Safety Liaison Officer, on 30<sup>th</sup> November, to discuss the installation of pedestrian crossings in the parish. Councillors Edey & Mrs Ross will also attend the meeting.
- (b) A response had been sent to Unity requesting that Comet Corner is included on the next Agenda and offering to contribute towards the cost of organising the meeting.

**8. PARISH LAND AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE**

Copies of the minutes dated 6<sup>th</sup> November 2005 had been circulated to members and were noted. WSCC Highways wrote stating that it had no responsibility for cutting the grass around the John Bailey memorial seat (adjacent to the Cabin car park) as it was not WSCC land. It required sight of the agreement with the Parish Council before it will cut the grass. The chances of locating the agreement are remote and any research will be timing consuming, so the Clerk has initially requested a copy of the Land Search to confirm the land ownership.

**9. CORRESPONDENCE**

The following items had been received:-

1. 4Sight – Funding request
2. Age Concern – Advice of new Chairman
3. ADC – Print Plus marketing literature
4. Arun Voice newsletter
5. Action in Rural Sussex newsletter
6. Citizens Advice Bureau - £100 funding request
7. Clerks & Councils Direct
8. Mr R Hills – October Parish Council Meeting (*email circulated*)
9. Local Council Review

10. Playwork South East newsletter
11. Vitalise – Funding request
12. WSCC Connections
13. Southern Water Waste Water Plant, Ford (*Letter circulated*)

Mrs Willis enquired about the situation regarding the Standards Board raised in Mr Hills' email (Item 8). The Clerk confirmed that he was in correspondence with the Standards Board but that these matters were confidential and could not be disclosed. He said that based on previous referrals to the Standards Board, it could take up to 2 years to be resolved. Mrs Mills stated that she had now received a written apology and retraction from Mr Mansfield in accordance with the resolution passed on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2005. The Chairman said he had received a telephone call from Mr Mansfield stating that an apology had been sent on the 20<sup>th</sup> July 2005, however, it had been apparently lost within the postal system so Mr Mansfield had sent a duplicate to Mrs Mills.

## 10. FINANCE COMMITTEE

### a) Bank Accounts -

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

Current Account	£ 1,250.00
Business Reserve	£39,649.18
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>£40,899.18</u></b>

### (b) Accounts for payment -

The following payments were approved nem.con and made:

(i) Arun District Council (Contribution to Larksfield Skate Park)	£5,000.00
(ii) D Allsopp (Middleton News Distributors' vouchers)	£ 140.00
(iii) D Fradgley (Tree work, Middleton Green)	£ 280.00
(iv) Jubilee Hall (January/December 2005 Hall Hire)	£ 180.00
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>£5,600.00</u></b>

## 11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Clerk reported that Mr Bernard Hills had telephoned to advise that he had represented the Parish Council at the Ford Airfield Remembrance Sunday service and laid the wreath. He said there were more people in attendance this year and that both Arun District Council and WSCC representatives laid wreaths for the first time.

District Councillor Mrs Oakley said the Flying Fortress transport scheme should be publicised through schools, local newsagents and pubs (for the benefit of parents). She also hopes to assist with the Middleton Green clear-up on 10<sup>th</sup> December.

## 12. PUBLIC DISCUSSION PERIOD

Mrs Mulvaney reported that the overhanging tree in Elmer Road had been cut back and that she liked the return of the Public Discussion Period to the end of the meeting. Mr Hills said he sent the email to ascertain whether the requested apology for Mrs Mills had been received. He also commented about two pieces of wrong advice received from Arun District Council and said good advice could often be received from the public. Finally he gave his view on the likely ownership of the Sea Lane verge.

**13. CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS – Standing Order 63 & 64 are apposite**

Mr Wilkinson proposed, and Mrs Ross seconded, that in view of the nature of the business being transacted the public and press should be excluded from this part of the meeting where the newsletter was discussed.

**There** being no further business the Chairman reminded members that the next Meeting will be held on 15<sup>th</sup> December **at 6.30 p.m.** and the Meeting closed at 8.35 p.m.