

**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 20<sup>th</sup> December 2006**

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

1. **APOLOGIES** – Councillors Chandler, Edey, Ms Ross, Mrs Brown, Mr Morrison and Mrs Mulvaney.
2. **MINUTES** –The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 18<sup>th</sup> October 2006 having been circulated were approved and signed.
3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** – Mr Copeland declared a prejudicial interest in Item 5 (e) and part of Item 12 as his parents live nearby to WSCC land which is being considered for future development. Mr Mansfield declared a prejudicial interest in Item 5 (f) being a nearby resident of the junction of the A259 and B2132. Mrs Mills declared a prejudicial interest in Item 5(e) and part of Item 12 as she is a nearby resident of WSCC land which is being considered for future development. Mr Wotherspoon declared a personal interest in Item 10 (b)(i) being Parish Council Chairman.
4. **ITEMS not otherwise on the Agenda but which the Chairman considered to be matter of urgency due to special circumstances** – The Chairman reported that he attended the 39 Youth Club AGM on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2006 at which thanks were expressed to Mr Jeffrey for his involvement in the management of the youth club. The Chairman also attended a meeting at Aldwick Parish Council offices on 21<sup>st</sup> November to discuss Bognor Regis Regeneration.

**5. MATTERS ARISING**

**a) Proposed Budget 2007/8**

Copies of the proposed Draft Budget, Simplified Draft Budget and Finance Committee minutes dated 7<sup>th</sup> December 2006 were circulated to members prior to the meeting. The Clerk advised that the Finance Committee had agreed to recommend a Precept of £34,000 which will be a £1,000 increase over the existing Precept of £33,000, which has been maintained for 3 years. The proposed increase represented a rise of 3% which is below the current rate of inflation. The total budget expenditure will be £40,360 and the residual shortfall of £6,360 will be absorbed by surplus cash balances. A Specific Reserve had been created for funding improvements to Larksfield Skate Board Park. £1,000 has been allocated in the current financial year and a further £1,000 will be added at the beginning of the next financial year. The Chairman and Vice Chairman thanked the Clerk for preparing the budget papers. Mrs Mills proposed acceptance of the budget and a £34,000 Precept and this was seconded by Mr Jeffrey and agreed by an overwhelming majority.

**b) Community Support Requests 2006**

A paper was circulated to members detailing the 11 community support requests which were received against the budget of £500. After some discussion Mr Copeland proposed, Mrs Mills seconded and it was unanimously agreed to make the following grants:

4 Sight £50, Arun Co-ordinated Community Transport £90, Bognor Regis Neighbourhood Watch £100, Citizens Advice Bureau £100, Sammy Community Transport £100, Sussex PFA £10 and WRVS £50.

Mr Copeland further proposed that a youth grant of £200 was made to Middleton Girlguiding and this was seconded by Mrs Mills and unanimously agreed.

The Clerk will notify all applicants of the result of their grant application.

**c) Rights of Way Improvement Plan**

The Draft Plan had been circulated to members and it was agreed not to comment.

**d) Inspire Leisure Major Summer Event 2007**

Inspire Leisure are proposing to hold a “Family Fun Day” on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2007 and believe it will be more successful if it was multi-agency led. It was unanimously decided that (a) as the event occurred after the 2007 local elections and (b) that there was no budget allocated that the Parish Council should decline the request.

**e) Proposed allotments**

Following the meeting with WSCC’s Head of Property Services, a letter was received stating the County Council’s position and this had been circulated to members. The Clerk read extracts of the letter which stated, *inter alia*, that the County Council’s Member Advisor made it very clear that any consideration of land disposal would at least need to respect open market value principles and would include the future “hope value” for longer term potential development of the County Council’s land “on the very edge of the built up settlement area”. If, however, the Parish Council was willing to consider some form of supportive partnership approach which would facilitate the early development of any appropriate parts of WSCC’s land holding at Ancton Lane, then this might form the basis for further joint exploration of the two councils objective.

The Chairman said he was very concerned about the wording of the letter with words such as ‘future hope value’ and ‘early development’. With no prospect of obtaining any WSCC land he was against raising the precept or seeking loans to fund allotments and the present budget had no funding allocation for an allotment scheme. He further pointed out that whilst 18% of respondents to the Village Action Plan questionnaire expressed an interest in allotments, 82% were not in favour of it and that the cost of proceeding at Larksfield will be in the £21,000 - £60,000 range. Mr Mansfield said there was no mileage in pursuing allotments. The Clerk briefed members about the provision of allotments following the receipt of advice from SALC. Mr Mansfield proposed ‘*Not to take a decision until the criteria are met*’. This was seconded by Mrs Willis and carried by an overwhelming majority.

*(Mr Copeland and Mrs Mills left the meeting during discussion of this item)*

**f) Site 6/Comet Corner Meeting**

Councillors Jeffrey and Mrs Mills attended a meeting, at the invitation of Arun District Council, together with Felpham Parish representatives on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2006 to discuss the Site 6 S106 monies and Comet Corner. It was confirmed that the legal agreement includes £1m for highway improvements, including Comet Corner, albeit Felpham Parish

Council dispute this. Following the meeting, in informal discussions, Cllr Paul English (Felpham Parish Council) invited members of this council to a meeting to discuss Comet Corner improvements. Councillors Jeffrey and Mrs Mills thought it was worthwhile exploring this avenue to see if some common ground can be established. Mr Copeland proposed that the meeting should proceed. This was seconded by Mrs Mills and unanimously agreed. The Clerk was requested to obtain a full copy of the Section 106 Agreement.

*(Mr Mansfield left the meeting during discussion of this item)*

## **6. DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE**

Copies of the minutes dated 18<sup>th</sup> October, 1<sup>st</sup> November and 6<sup>th</sup> December 2006 were circulated and noted.

## **7. GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

Copies of the minutes dated 15<sup>th</sup> November 2006 were circulated and noted.

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

(a) Nothing to report

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

Two sets of briefing notes of the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2006 prepared by both Mrs Willis and Professor Johns (Middleton-on-Sea Association) were circulated to members.

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

The Clerk advised:

- (a) Middleton News was distributed on 14<sup>th</sup> December and that it included a full page advertisement for a new Co-ordinator. Some enquiries had been received and it was agreed that either Mr Copeland, or Mrs Mills, and the Clerk will interview any strong applicants.
- (b) PCSO Teresa Bridger has resigned and currently there is no PCSO allocated to Middleton and Elmer although Felpham's PCSO (Toby Florescu) is trying to provide some level of cover. Vandalism is on the rise with damage sustained to a fingerpost sign, council notice board, Shrubbs Field Pavilion and adjacent picnic benches. PCSO Florescu and Sgt Wilkie have been invited to attend January's meeting but no acceptance has been received to date.
- (c) Sussex and Surrey Associations of Local Councils Autumn Circular has been distributed to all members.
- (d) The agenda and minutes of Arun District Council's Standards Sub-Committee meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2006 have been placed in general circulation.

### **iv) Projects Advisory Sub Committee**

A £50,000 Big Play in Arun grant application has been submitted seeking funds for additional equipment at Larksfield Skate Board Park. Further, confirmation has been received from Felpham Parish Council that it wishes to continue in partnership with this council and ADC to further improve the Larksfield Skate Park and has allocated £5,000

in the 2007/8 budget towards new equipment and seating. This is addition to the £2,000 allocated by this council.

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

The Clerk advised:

- (a) Following concerns raised at October's meeting that work to install verge bollards opposite One Stop, as agreed with County Councillor Mrs Freeman in March, had not been completed the Clerk liaised with WSCC Highways and the installation was completed within 7 days.
- (b) Following a written request, WSCC Highways have agreed to tarmac a section of verge opposite One Stop which is becoming muddy due to constant pedestrian traffic.
- (c) A further 6 highway issues highlighted by parishioners at October's meeting have been drawn to WSCC Highways Department's attention and a letter has been received detailing the action being taken.

**8. PARISH LAND AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE**

Copies of the minutes dated 1<sup>st</sup> November 2006 were circulated and noted.

**9. CORRESPONDENCE**

The following items had been received:-

- (1) ADC Prospective Councillors Event - 29<sup>th</sup> November 2006.
- (2) Arun Times
- (3) Clean and Safe Team – Anti-Social Behaviour Update
- (4) Clerks and Councils Direct
- (5) Countryside Alliance circular re Post Office closures
- (6) Mr & Mrs Duckling – Letter re street parking in Elmer Road
- (7) Mr B Hills – Letter re Ford wreath laying ceremony
- (8) ICIS Newsletter
- (9) LCR – White Paper Special
- (10) LCR
- (11) Royal British Legion – Letter of thanks
- (12) Standards Board for England – Bulletin 8
- (13) WSCC School Transport Consultation
- (14) West Sussex Public Partnership Forum - Newsletter

**10. FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**a) Bank Accounts -**

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

Current Account	£ 1,250.00
Business Reserve	£38,958.46
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>£40,208.46</u></b>

**(b) Accounts for payment -**

The following payments were approved nem.con and made:

(i)	P Wotherspoon (Chairman's Honorarium)	£ 250.00
(ii)	SPP (Middleton News setting/printing)	£1,640.00
(iii)	D F Allsopp (Clerk's quarterly fees/expenses)	£2,876.14
(iv)	D F Allsopp (Quarterly office expenses)	£ 141.29
(v)	S Rees (Middleton News Co-ordinator fee/expenses)	£ 428.00
(vi)	P Allsopp (Distribution of Middleton News)	£ 50.00
(vii)	B Cursons (Repair to finger post sign opposite Sea Lane)	£ 50.00
<b>Total</b>		<b><u>£5,435.43</u></b>

**(c) Accounts paid at General Purposes Committee – 15<sup>th</sup> November 2006**

The following payments were ratified and approved nem.con:

D F Allsopp (Middleton News Vouchers)	£ 150.00
B Cursons (Repairs to Parish Council Notice Board)	£ 70.00
The Royal British Legion – The Poppy Wreath (Wreath)	£ 25.00
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>£ 245.00</u></b>

**11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr Mansfield requested that a copy WSCC's definitive land holding map for the parish is placed into circulation. The Clerk was instructed accordingly.

**12. PUBLIC DISCUSSION PERIOD**

The Chairman advised Mr Brookland that he had contacted Arun District Council regarding the rubbish/debris under the seat in Middleton Road and they had instructed their contractor to clear it. Mr Brookland said the rubbish was still there so the Chairman agreed to contact ADC again.

Mr Brookland said that whilst some verge bollards had been installed, vehicles were now parking to the east of them adjacent to the bus stop. He said further bollards were needed but that was not supported by a number of councillors. Mr Brookland also wanted to raise a series of other WSCC Highways issues however the Chairman told him it was for County Councillor Mrs Freeman to resolve these matters, not the Parish Council. Mr Brookland was provided with County Councillor Mrs Freeman's telephone number.

Miss Cox said she was pleased that allotments were not proceeding as she had real concerns about the acre of land on Larksfield which she uses for her horses. Mr Mansfield queried why Mr Copeland attended the meeting with WSCC's Head of Property Services if he had a prejudicial interest. The Clerk advised that the interest only became apparent during that meeting and Mr Jeffrey confirmed that Mr Copeland had declared his interest immediately it became known. *(Mr Copeland and Mrs Mills left the meeting during discussion of this item)*

**There** being no further business, the Chairman wished everyone a Happy Christmas and reminded members that the next Meeting will be held on **17<sup>th</sup> January 2007 at 7.00 p.m.** and the Meeting closed at 8.00 p.m.