

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 19th December 2007

PRESENT – Councillors Wotherspoon (Chairman), Copeland, Edey, Gamester, Mrs Hall, Mrs Haywood, Jeffrey, Mansfield, Mrs Mills, Ms Ross, the Clerk, District Councillor Mrs Oakley and Mr Morrison.

1. **APOLOGIES** – Mr Chandler and County Councillor Mrs Freeman.
2. **MINUTES** –The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 17th October 2007 having been circulated were approved and signed.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr Mansfield declared a prejudicial interest in item 6(f) being a nearby resident of the junction of the A259/B2132. Ms Ross declared a personal interest in item 6 (f) being a resident of Felpham. Mr Wotherspoon declared three personal interests – (i) Item 6 (b) being Arun District Council’s Cabinet Member responsible for car parks, (ii) Item 8.3 (b) being a recipient of a Middleton News voucher and (iii) Item 11 (b) (i) being Chairman of the Parish Council.

4. PUBLIC DISCUSSION PERIOD

Mrs Teri Claxton (Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator) said she had investigated the problems at the Elmer Sands Kiosk which were reported at October’s meeting. She said only four telephone calls had been made to the police but steps were now being taken to improve the situation.

PCSO Clive Morge provided details of the crime statistics for Middleton area together with Marine by way of comparison. He said that Elmer Sands was being targeted and that anti-social behaviour was improving albeit someone had broken the kiosk fences recently. He also suggested installing a CCTV camera to monitor the area by the Jubilee Hall and car park, however the Clerk drew attention to a crime prevention survey undertaken a few years ago. It was then stated that identification of individuals would be difficult and that there was insufficient capacity for the police to monitor the camera. Its data would therefore have to be stored on a hard drive and inspected periodically which would make it difficult to trace individual offenders. PCSO Morge also suggested removing the wooden goalposts. The Clerk advised that the matter will have to be referred to the Playing Field Trustees meeting in February 2008. Mr Copeland asked if any action was being taken about a number of paper boys & girls who were riding their bikes without lights in darkness. PCSO Morge said he had spoken with the newsagents. Members of the Council thanked PCSO Morge for being so conscientious in his work.

Mrs Willis thanked Ms Ross, John Knight (WSCC Ranger) and all the volunteers which cleared up Middleton Green on 8th December in torrential rain and high winds. She also

asked the Chairman why he had not responded to her letter which was sent during October. The Chairman apologised and instructed the Clerk to place it on January's agenda.

Mrs Brown advised that during the building work at Avisford Medical Centre, the adjacent car park light had been removed. It has now been reinstated but is not illuminated at night which is making it very dark for pedestrians crossing the car park. The Chairman said he would resolve the matter.

5. ITEMS not otherwise on the Agenda but which the Chairman considered to be a matter of urgency due to special circumstances – The Chairman reported that he, and Cllr Jeffrey, attended the 39 Neighbourhood Youth & Community Centre Annual General Meeting on 19th October 2007. He also attended a meeting of Parish Council Chairmen on 22nd October at North Bersted Community Centre. Finally, he reported that he had investigated the issues raised by Ms Bowden at the last meeting and that he had been assured that the car park will be resurfaced, where damaged, when the building works are complete and that 10 mph signs will be installed at the entrance, contemporaneously.

6. MATTERS ARISING

a) Parish Council Vacancy.

Two applications were received to become a co-opted Parish Councillor, from Calvin Watson and Matthew Redman. Mr Copeland proposed that the vacancy should be filled and this was seconded by Ms Ross and unanimously agreed. Mrs Mills proposed that the vote should be by signed ballot and that was seconded by Ms Ross and unanimously agreed. The result on the ballot was:

Calvin Watson	3 votes
Matthew Redman	6 votes
Abstention	1 vote

Matthew Redman was duly co-opted as a Parish Councillor and will take his seat in January 2008.

b) Budget 2008/2009

The Finance Committee proposed a precept of £37,000 for 2008/9 against budgeted costs of £43,410. The shortfall of £6,410 will be covered by existing bank balances. The precept rose last year to £34,000 after the 3 previous years when it was held steady at £33,000. This year's proposed rise is 8.8% and includes the establishment of a £4.5k playground equipment sinking fund. It represents a 12% rise in the precept over 5 years i.e. 2.4% per annum. Further, the Specific Reserve has been increased from £2k to £8k for funding improvements to Larksfield Skate Board Park. This will be increased further to £10k if grant funding is obtained for the proposed Shrubbs Field kickwall. The Chairman thanked the Finance Committee and Mr Copeland thanked the Clerk for preparing the budgets.

Mr Mansfield said he was disappointed as the proposed increase was ahead of inflation and it was wrong to give the Skate Park £8,000. The money could have been retained

and put towards the cost of a pedestrian crossing and he will not support the budget. Mrs Hall queried why £700 had been spent on Community Support Donations in 2006 and was advised that a £200 youth grant had been given to Middleton Girlguiding.

Mr Copeland proposed acceptance of the budget and an increased precept of £37,000. This was seconded by Mr Jeffrey and agreed by an overwhelming majority.

c) Community Support Requests 2007

A paper was circulated to members detailing the 7 community support requests which were received against the budget of £500. After some discussion Mrs Mills proposed, Ms Ross seconded and it was unanimously agreed to make the following grants:

4 Sight £50, Bognor Regis Neighbourhood Watch £100, Bognor Regis Stroke Support Group £40, Citizens Advice Bureau £100, Samaritans £100, Sammy Community Transport £100 and Sussex PFA £10.

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

d) Proposed Footpath in Middleton Road

A letter from the Area Highway Manager (Arun), WSCC advised that CLCs can adjust priorities of schemes within the Integrated Works Programme and he is therefore arranging that a new scheme is raised to amend footpath works to the northside of Middleton Road. If approved, the funding for the design will not be available until April 2008. Realistically, work will not commence until Jan/March 2009. Mr Copeland said that members of JWAAC were outraged, initially, when there was the possibility of the funds being taken away to be used elsewhere.

e) Wide variation in Pedestrian Crossing costs

The Clerk advised that he had circulated correspondence with County Councillor Freeman regarding crossing costs. The Parish Council has been advised that the costs are £48,000-£70,000 for a pedestrian crossing but the Clerk has ascertained that a crossing is being provided at Beaumont Park, Littlehampton for £25,000 and sought answers to three questions regarding the variation in costs on 1st November. No response has been provided by Kieran Stigant (WSCC), apparently due to pressure of work. Members were very concerned at the poor response. The Clerk was therefore instructed to write to County Councillor Freeman asking for the answers to the three questions plus a breakdown of costs for the various crossings. Members wish to have a reply before the 16th January 2008 meeting.

f) Comet Corner/Site 6 Position Statements

The Clerk reported that it was understood that County Councillor Blampied, Chairman JWAAC, has asked WSCC Highways to produce a revised position statement that will reflect the allocation of Section 106 monies from Site 6 across the area, rather than just at Comet Corner. This has been taken up with WSCC's Group Manager Development Planning as there are concerns that the Section 106 monies are going to be used exclusively within Felpham Parish. The Group Manager advises that the original position statement remains the Cabinet member's position and has arranged a meeting with the Clerks of Middleton and Yapton Parishes in the New Year. The Chairman said he was becoming concerned, particularly when he saw the 'shopping list' of

improvements Felpham Parish Council want. Mrs Mills and Mr Jeffrey said they still believed it was beneficial to attend the Site 6 meetings, if only to maintain dialogue, albeit they did concur with the Chairman's conclusions.

(Mr Mansfield left the room whilst this item was being discussed).

7. DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

Copies of the minutes dated 17th October, 7th November, 21st November and 5th December 2007 were circulated and noted. Mr Edey said that the new arrangements for the first committee meeting of the month (without the Clerk being present) worked well and that there were no problems.

8. GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Copies of the minutes dated 21st November 2007 were circulated and noted.

i) Countryside and the Environment Advisory Sub Committee

Ms Ross said that when undertaking the pond clear-up there was puddling on the footpath at the northern end and that some form of drainage may be required. It was agreed that the Pond Warden would review the position and place her recommendations to the General Purposes committee.

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

Nothing to report.

(iii) Liaison Advisory Sub Committee

The Clerk summarised the position regarding WSCC's proposal to disband the 3 Area Committees, including JWAAC, and substitute two CLCs (County Council Local Committee) titled 'Arun East' and 'Arun West'. This has met substantive opposition and it turns out that disbandment is not in the gift of the county council, although it can withdraw if it so chooses. Letters have been exchanged between the County and District councils but the position has yet to be resolved. WSCC has invited parish councils to a one hour consultation meeting on 17th January 2008 and Arun District Council have invited parish councils to a meeting on 15th January 2008. It was agreed that Mr Jeffrey will attend the District Council meeting but no one was available to attend the county council meeting.

The Clerk advised:

- (a) A charge of £249 is to be levied by Arun District Council to cover the 3rd May 2007 election costs in the parish.
- (b) Middleton News was distributed on 13th December. Distributors received 'thank you' vouchers and a number have contacted the Clerk to express their thanks.
- (c) A response from Chief Inspector Bracher has been circulated to all members.
- (d) SALC Autumn Bulletin has been received and circulated.
- (e) The Standards Committee agenda for 20th December has been received and circulated.

iv) Projects Advisory Sub Committee

A letter from Felpham Parish Council regarding Larksfield Skatepark has been received and circulated. Cllr English expressed his appreciation at this parish council's decision to increase funding and said it was a very good example of two parishes working together.

v) Roads & Transport Advisory Sub Committee

Felpham Parish Council's Site 6 committee minutes, dated 8th November 2007, were circulated to all members. A response has been received from WSCC Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport regarding Bus Service 663 (Elmer Sands to Felpham Community College). He stresses that the County Council did not withdraw funding for the journey, however, Felpham Community College changed their session times without consultation with the Transport Co-ordination department. This meant a bus was no longer available and that to provide another bus at peak times would have involved a substantial increase in costs.

PCSO Morge has advised that a SID (Speed Indicator Device) will soon be available for use by Town/Parish Councils within Arun. It will be based at Bognor Regis Fire Station and will be issued on a first come first served basis. Further operational details are awaited.

9. PARISH LAND AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE

Copies of the minutes dated 7th November 2007 were circulated and noted.

10. CORRESPONDENCE

The following items had been received:-

- (1) Action in Rural Sussex - Newsletter
- (2) ADC – Sustainable Energy Seminar (*Full Circulation*)
- (3) Bishop Tufnell Infants School – Letter of Thanks (*General Circulation*)
- (4) Bognor Regis TC – Remembrance Service times (*General Circulation*)
- (5) British Legion – Letter of Thanks (*General Circulation*)
- (6) Clerks & Councils Direct
- (7) ICIS News – Newsletter
- (8) LCR – formerly Local Council Review
- (9) Wellspring – Newsletter
- (10) WSCC- Minerals & Waste Update (*General Circulation*)
- (11) West Sussex NHS PCT – 3 editions Fit for the Future (*Full Circulation*)

11. FINANCE COMMITTEE

a) Bank Accounts -

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

Current Account	£ 1,250.00
Business Reserve	£43,609.79
Total	<u>£44,859.79</u>

(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)	£ 3,033.10
(iv)	D F Allsopp (Quarterly office expenses)	£ 128.98
(v)	A J Houlden (Middleton News Co-ordinator fees/expenses)	£ 549.94
(vi)	P Allsopp (Distribution of Middleton News)	£ 50.00
(vii)	SLCC (Annual Subscription)	£ 129.00
(viii)	CPRE Sussex (Planning Seminar Cllr Jeffrey)	£ 40.00
(ix)	K Wymbs (Tree felling/maintenance)	£ 490.00
Total		<u>£ 6,311.02</u>

(c) Accounts paid at General Purposes Committee – 21st November 2007

<i>Kevin Wymbs (Tree Audit)</i>	£ 80.00
TOTAL	£ 80.00

12 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Clerk advised that his office will be closed from 21st December 2007 to 2nd January 2008 and that the Development Control Committee meeting for 2nd January is cancelled. The next committee meeting will be on 16th January 2008.

Ms Ross asked why a letter received in October had not been responded too. The Chairman said he accepted responsibility for that and apologised. The letter will be dealt with at January's meeting.

District Councillor Oakley said she attended the Neighbourhood Management Forum and had attended the launch of the Star buses. She congratulated Johnny Izzard and all the volunteers who collected a record amount for the British Legion Poppy Appeal. She has also chaired a committee assessing the need for a third crematorium in the district.

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 correspondence from Arun District Councillor's solicitor was discussed.

There being no further business the Chairman reminded members that the next Meeting will be held on **16th January 2008 at 7.00 p.m.** The Meeting closed at 8.20 p.m.