

MIDDLETON PARISH COUNCIL

The Annual Meeting of the Parish was held on Tuesday 17th April 2018 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall Annexe, Cottingham.

Present: Cllrs Brant (Chair), Cole, Freeman, Hicks and Thomas and Mrs Medwell (Clerk).

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed all who attended

2. Chair's Annual Report 2017-18 – The following report was presented by Cllr Brant and circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting.

“I am pleased to report that the Council has had a full complement of Councillors for the last year and I'd like to record my thanks to them and our Parish Clerk for their time and energy in supporting the work of the Parish Council.

Planning

The major planning issue for the Council in the last year has been consultation over the West Corby Sustainable Urban Extension (West Corby SUE) which includes proposals for the building of 4,500 homes and associated employment, retail, education, health and community facilities to the west of the A6003 and south of the A427. Although the edge of the development will be more than a kilometre away from the village, much of the site falls within the Middleton Parish boundary.

In responding to the consultation on the West Corby SUE, the Council collaborated with the parishes of Cottingham, East Carlton and Rockingham which will also be significantly affected by the development. In light of the significance and size of the proposed development, Middleton Parish Council requested that the developers present a summary of the outline planning application to a public meeting. The meeting was well attended and since that meeting the four parishes have agreed to work together in responding to the consultation. All four parishes responded with comments on the planning application with Middleton PC's response focusing largely on concerns over traffic flow and plans for the improvement of the road system to support the development. Northamptonshire County Council has agreed to convene a meeting with Corby Borough Council, the Developers and the four parishes as soon as further data has been collected in relation to current and predicted traffic flow around the new development.

In October 2017 a Housing Needs Survey was undertaken within the Parish by Midlands Rural Housing on behalf of Corby Borough Council. The results of the survey will inform Corby Borough Council's Housing Strategy and Planning Policy and its emerging Part 2 Local Plan which will set out how land is used and what will be built where. It will also inform any Neighbourhood Planning Policy developed within the Parish. The author of the report will present the findings to the Council's meeting in April.

The Street Scene

In January 2017 Middleton Parish Council requested that residents and visitors ensure that they park entirely on the road throughout the village and not partly on the pavement, to ensure that pedestrians, buggies and mobility scooters can pass. The majority of residents have responded positively, although it does prove challenging when trades vehicles are visiting the village to carry out building work etc.

The Council also wrote to local landowners to alert them to this and to ask that they re-route larger agricultural vehicles as they are unlikely to be able to pass along Main Street and The Hill. During the harvest period this appeared to have had a positive effect on the number of exceptionally large vehicles driving through the village.

Litter picks in spring and autumn this year have been well attended and seem to be making an impact on the amount of litter on the routes regularly cleared. Fly tipping remains a problem in a number of hotspots which require prompt reporting to Corby BC to ensure that they are cleared.

An additional litter bin has been installed at the end of Swinglers' path in response to complaints about dog fouling and regular stencilling of pavements with 'No dog fouling' messages has been undertaken. The Council remains alert to the problem of dog fouling as there remain a number of persistent offenders yet to be identified.

The Council has part funded the repair of the Obelisk light in Glover Court this year in recognition of its importance to the street scene. Further work on the culvert at the edge of Glover Court has also been undertaken and it has been added to the regular maintenance contract to ensure that vegetation surrounding and on the bed of the culvert does not become unsightly.

Defibrillator Project

Despite a number of set-backs and a lengthy implementation process, the Defibrillator Project was completed in January once BT had agreed to reconnect the electricity to the phone box. A training and familiarity session was offered on the use of the defibrillator and was well attended. The defibrillator is designed for use by any member of the public and all homes in Middleton and Cottingham have been given a key fob with the access code for the defibrillator cabinet. Thanks go to Northants County Council Community Empowerment Fund, the Rockingham Wheelers and the Copyholders, who along with the Parish Council funded the project.

Rights of Way and Footpaths

The year has seen a review of local Rights of Way by Northants County Council and Parish Councillors walked all of the routes and reported back on their state of accessibility.

Concerns regarding horse riding along the section of the Jurassic Way from The Hill to East Carlton Park have been reported to Northants County Council which has undertaken to replace the gates to that section of path, when funds allow, inhibiting horse riding.

The Community Orchard

The Council has changed the contractor used to maintain the quality of the grass in the Community Orchard and the quality has subsequently improved. A contract has been let this year for the first major pruning of the trees and shrubs in the Orchard since its inception.

Village Hall

A Planning application was finally presented to Corby Borough Council in March but the planning meeting was cancelled and a late request was made for a tree survey to support the application. The application should be considered by Corby in the summer.

Financial matters

For a number of years Northants County Council's response to specific requests to fill pot holes, clear drains and improve road signs etc. has been to place them on a long waiting list due to very limited finances. The financial position of the County

has come to a head this year with a Section 114 notice being issued which froze all spending on matters other than those for which the County Council has a statutory responsibility. Following an inspection report the County Council is set to use reserves to achieve a balanced budget this financial year and local government reform to create two unitary authorities in the county seems likely. The Parish Council awaits developments with interest; as such change is likely to bring both opportunities and potential threats to local decision making.

In setting the Precept at £5,520 in December the Council was mindful of the decision by Corby Borough Council to remove its Parish Grant in a phased reduction over three years. The Precept is likely to increase in future years to make up the funding shortfall”.

3. Presentation of Financial Statement 2017-2018 – The Clerk referred to the statement of financial accounts and reported that the balances as of 31st March 2018 totalled £53,878.52. This consists of £42,091 ring fenced for the new Village Hall and £11,788 reserves.

4. Meeting Open to the Public: There were no members of the public present.

The meeting closed at 7.43pm

Signed as a true record:

_____	Chair
_____	Clerk
_____	Date

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