

# **MIDDLETON PARISH COUNCIL**

700

The Meeting of the Parish Council was held on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall Annexe, Cottingham.

Present: Cllrs Brant (Chair), Cole (Vice Chair), Freeman, Freestone, Hicks and Thomas, Mrs Medwell (Parish Clerk) and trustees of The Copyholders – Messrs Curtis and Freestone.

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1. To Approve Apologies for Absence:

Cllr Bradshaw  
Borough Cllr Rutt

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2. Declaration of Interests on Items on the Agenda

There were no declarations of interests.

There were no changes to the members Registers of Interests.

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3. Minutes: The minutes of the meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2020 were duly approved and signed by the Chair.

Proposed Cllr Freeman

Seconded Cllr Freestone

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4. Matters Arising:

The Council noted a successful litter pick with an encouraging turnout from both villages despite the inclement weather. The Council extended its thanks to all who participated and to Cllr Hicks for co-ordinating.

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5. Meeting Open for Public Participation:

The Chair welcomed the visitors.

A discussion took place regarding the Copyholders' Field on the Ashley Road. The Council noted that following unauthorised works at the adjacent Travellers' site, a mature field hedge between the site and the Copyholders' paddock has been removed and the combination of the newly installed hard standing and the new fence has encroached roughly 3 feet into the Copyholders' paddock. It appears that water drainage (possibly foul water) is running off the site into the Copyholders' paddock. It was noted that the Copyholders intended to write formally to the occupants of the traveller site regarding this encroachment onto the Copyholders' land and the resulting water run-off from the site. The Copyholders' representatives confirmed that the Copyholders' had agreed that the land was not for sale to the occupants of the adjoining site. The Council and Copyholder trustees then discussed the possibility of a joint project between the Copyholders and Middleton and Cottingham Parish Councils which could result in the planting of trees in the paddock in line with the villages' commitment to countering climate change. The Council warmly welcomed this proposal and agreed that in that context, joint ownership of the land and responsibility for its upkeep would be considered by Middleton Parish Council. Mr Curtis undertook to raise the matter with Cottingham Parish Council and the Chair confirmed that she would be happy to hold urgent discussions with both other parties to move this matter forward.

Mr Curtis updated the Council regarding the volunteer position at the shop in light of current government advice on COVID-19 and self-isolation. The shop was reviewing opening hours in light of more limited volunteer availability and would be running on revised opening hours for the time being. New volunteers would be very welcome to help the shop stay open through this difficult period.

The Chair thanked the visitors who duly left the meeting at 7.54 pm. (Meeting closed to the public.)

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6. New Village Hall and Recreational Ground:

The Chair informed the Council that a project manager had been appointed and that an archaeological survey would be the next stage of the project. There has been an expression of interest in youth football at the recreation ground which could assist in an application to Sport England. In light of the ongoing COVID-19 coronavirus situation it has not been necessary to postpone a number of fund-raising events.

Signed.....Chair

Date.....

7. Orchard and Open Space:

There was nothing to report on this item.

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8. Highways, Lighting and Rights of Way:

**Manor House Pavement** – The restitution of the drive and footpath at the Manor House had been referred to Northamptonshire Highways Enforcement. The Council is awaiting a response from NCC Sarah Barnwell with regards to this.

**Lighting** –It was noted that all previously reported faulty lamps had been repaired. Cllr Cole advised that the lamp at 22 Glover Court was now out – Cllr Freeman will report to CBC (*action TF*).

The Council was pleased to note that the large and unexpected bill received by a local resident from County Highways regarding the installation of temporary traffic lights on The Hill for the period during which he repaired his damaged wall, had been greatly reduced. The Council thanked County Cllr Naden-Horley for her assistance in the matter

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9. Safety Review of Parish Assets:

Cllr Cole reported that all parish assets were fit for purpose.

The Clerk advised the Council that new pads had been ordered and received for the defibrillator to replace the out of date pads. The routine check of the defibrillator had been recorded on the Webnos site.

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10. Welland Wanderer Community Bus:

The Council approved the 2020/21 contribution of £380 towards the community bus scheme. The Chair advised the Council that Corby Borough Council have offered financial support for the service subject to a matching contribution from Kettering Borough Council, which is considering its position and looking at the figures.

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11. Elections 2020:

The Council noted that the scheduled Town and Parish elections set for May 2020 have been cancelled due to the ongoing COVID-19 situation. All Councillors agreed to continue in their roles in the meantime.

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12. Monthly Crime Report:

There were no incidents of crime to report this month.

All information pertaining to local crime can be found by entering the relevant postcode on [www.police.uk](http://www.police.uk)

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13. VE Day 8<sup>th</sup> May:

The Council noted that all celebrations had been cancelled due to the ongoing COVID-19 coronavirus situation.

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14. Planning:

**20/00097/COU Travellers Site, Ashley Road Retrospective application for the material change of use to residential caravan site including erection of boundary walls and fences, construction of new access and erection of ancillary amenity building**

The Council considered the above application and made the following detailed response.

Firstly, the Parish Council expressed its disappointment that this matter is resulting in a retrospective planning application given that this site has been the subject of a number of successful applications in recent years and the planning process is well known to the occupants.

The development that is the subject of this application has effectively divided the site into two, making two separate sites each with an access on either side of a sharp right angle bend with very poor visibility. The introduction of a second access point so close to the 90 degree bend in the road is extremely hazardous. This is a narrow country road with no grass verge that is

Signed.....Chair

Date.....

regularly used by horse riders and cyclists (a livery yard is located less than 50 metres to the north west of the site and the Rockingham Wheelers Cycling Club is located on the edge of Middleton less than half a mile south of the site).

This development is in the Council's view, an over-intensification of the site and will lead to a significant increase in vehicular movements thus increasing the danger of collision on this narrow country road with such a sharp bend.

The introduction of hard surfaces across the site has significantly reduced the possibility of surface water drainage on site which means that rain water is either diverted onto the road which is hazardous, or into surrounding fields which is not acceptable to neighbouring landowners.

The process of installing a hard surface on the newly created site, the removal of the field hedge to the west of the site and its replacement by a wooden fence has encroached approximately three feet into the adjacent paddock owned by the Copyholders, a small charity based in Cottingham and Middleton.

It is not clear whether the erection of a new amenity building on the newly created second site has involved connection to the foul sewer. Two pipes are visible, draining into the paddock to the west of the site and have caused flooding (see photo attached). This is a significant danger to health and totally unacceptable. Residents of the site have been seen placing their refuse bins in the copyholders paddock and removing fence panels to access them.

With regard to the planning application form completed by Philip Brown Associates, the Parish Council would make the following comments.

- Section 7 on plans for waste storage and collection seems to imply that no plans have been made for rubbish and recycling collection – presumably that is unacceptable?
- Section 11 relating to mains sewage seems contradictory. It appears to assert that the new site will be connected to the mains sewer but states that there is no proposal to connect to the existing drainage system. We would ask for clarification about the exact nature of the foul drainage from this site as it appears to be draining into the adjacent paddock.
- Section 15 relating to 'trees and hedges' is patently incorrect. A perfectly healthy, mature field hedge between the site and the Copyholders' paddock, which was a rich environment for birds and insects has been grubbed out and a wooden fence erected. In addition, the mature hedge between the site and the road, which effectively screened the site, has been removed to make the second entrance.
- Section 12 on flood risk states that the site is not within 20 metres of a stream which is incorrect as there is a stream running to the east of the road on which the site is located.
- Section 29 asks if the site can be seen from the road and the applicant has responded 'no'. The site is very obviously visible from the road, increasingly so since the removal of a mature hedge between the site and the road, in order to create a second entrance.

In summary, the Parish Council objected to this planning application for the reasons outlined above and urged Corby Borough Council to reject it.

The Parish Council also noted that current planning permission is for three caravans to be occupied by a named family and its dependents and would ask that a check is made that this requirement is being complied with.

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#### 15. Copyholders Update:

This was covered in Item 5.

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#### 16. Finance:

a) The following cheques were presented for signature and unanimously **agreed**:

101573	Clerk – Salary and Expenses	325.00
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Signed.....Chair

Date.....

101574	Besthost – Website	17.25
101575	Steve Morphy – Grass Cutting	60.00
101576	Jamie Bradshaw – Culvert Maintenance	60.00
101577	Steve Morphy – Grass Cutting	170.00
101578	Cottingham VHMHC – Hall Hire	12.00
101579	Wilbarston PC – Community Bus Contribution	360.00

Receipts	
NCC – Mowing Grant	110.17

#### SUMMARY OF BALANCES

National Savings	40,840.72
Business Reserve	166.86
Community Account	4,014.86

Less Allocation for Village Hall	35,990.50
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Total:	<b>£9,031.94</b>
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b) The Council unanimously **approved** the bank reconciliation which was then duly signed by the Chair.

At this point the Council noted correspondence from a local resident questioning the reason for the increase in parish precept. This is due to the fact that Corby Borough Council has in previous years paid a concurrent expenditure grant to the parish which unfortunately has reduced over the last three years. This grant, which last year provided the parish with £814, has now been phased out. In addition, the Parish Council has budgeted an extra £360 by way of contribution to the Welland Wanderer bus service to Market Harborough. In real terms this means an increase of £11.44 for the year on a Band G property. A notice to this effect will be put on the website and notice board to clarify the reason for the increase.

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#### 17. Correspondence:

Amongst other correspondence were the following items, all e-mailed:

NCALC – eUpdates

CBC – Northamptonshire's Unitary Programme

NCC – Councillors' Newsletter March 2020 / Weekly Works Programme

ACRE – Good Neighbours Scheme

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#### 18. Business for next meeting:

The next meeting to take place as planned, observing the requirements of social distancing, unless new government advice precludes that. If that is the case, electronic meeting options such as Zoom will be considered.

No business identified as yet.

The Council discussed the COVID-19 coronavirus crisis with a view to coordinating a scheme to reach out to every household in the village to ensure that everyone who is self-isolating has the opportunity for regular contact with someone to whom they can turn for help and support. A list of street co-ordinators will be drawn up and leaflets put through all doors with details of those volunteers. The Chair to work with the Vice Chair and Clerk of Cottingham Parish Council to implement the Scheme across both villages.

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There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.53 pm

Minutes to be ratified at the next Parish Council Meeting on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2020

Signed.....Chair

Date.....