

MIDDLETON PARISH COUNCIL

718

The Meeting of the Parish Council was held on Tuesday 15th September 2020 at 7.30 pm via Electronic Conferencing on account of the Government social distancing requirements.

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

1. To Approve Apologies for Absence:

There were none.

2. Declaration of Interests on Items on the Agenda or changes to the Members Register of Interests:

There were no declarations of interests.

There were no changes to the members Registers of Interests.

3. Minutes: The minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council on 14th July 2020 were duly approved and will be signed by the Clerk on behalf of the Chair.

Proposed Cllr Thomas Seconded Cllr Cole

4. Matters Arising not covered on the Agenda:

There were none.

5. Meeting open for public consultation.

There were no members of the public present.

6. Orchard and Open Space:

The Council noted that the fence at the back of the orchard had been repaired. A tree at the entrance had blown over in recent winds which had been re-staked. Cllrs Brant and Freeman will keep an eye on it to ascertain whether it needs a further stake (*action SB and TF*).

It was brought to the Council's attention that a few small growths of Japanese Knotweed had been detected in the fenced off area between the Orchard and 37 Main Street which had become very overgrown. These had been treated by the contractor TCM under warranty. The Council **agreed** to contact both Miller Homes and TCM to discuss the fenced off area and whether or not the Knotweed has been successfully eradicated. The Chair will arrange a site visit with the relevant parties (*action SB*).

7. Highways, Lighting and Rights of Way:

Village Sign – Cllr Freestone advised that she had not been able to find any local residents who may be in a position to assist with the refurbishment of the sign. The Clerk will contact local decorator John Connachie for any suggestions (*action JM*).

Speed Signs – Cllr Hicks advised that the faded 30 mph signs on The Hill were scheduled for repainting in the week commencing 28 September.

Litter Picking – The Council noted that Corby BC had advised that organised community litter picks cannot take place at present but that picking equipment was available for any resident who wished to use it on an individual basis. The Council thanked Cllr Hicks and a small group of dedicated residents for their sterling efforts in keeping the village and surrounding roads clear of litter in the meantime.

Heavy machinery – It was noted that a large agricultural vehicle had recently become stuck along

Signed.....Chair

Date.....

Main Street. The Clerk will write to the landowner involved (based in Ashley) asking that wherever possible these vehicles are routed away from Main Street particularly as during this time, when more people are working from home, it is too narrow to accommodate them (*action JM*).

8. Safety Review of Parish Assets:

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

The Clerk advised that the defibrillator had been checked and recorded on the Webnos site.

Following an enquiry from a local resident regarding the possibility of sponsoring a bench, the Council looked at comparative benches in the area which were found to be in excess of £1,000. The Council **agreed** therefore that the price of the benches in the Orchard would remain at the previously quoted price of £550.00 including plaque. The Clerk will pass this on to the interested resident (*action JM*).

9. Monthly Crime Report:

There were no crime statistics available to report.

Chair informed the Council that the signs for Occupation Lane requesting visitors keep to the footpath and informing them that the fields are private land with no access to the river were ready for installation. Cllr Freeman offered to put these up (*action TF*). Once the signs are in place the Chair will contact the tenant farmer and ask that the fence is repaired so that access to the river by the foot bridge is prevented (*action SB*). Once done the Council will clear the site of litter.

10. Website:

The Council referred to new Website Accessibility Regulations which determine that public sector organisations have a legal duty to make sure websites meet accessibility requirements. The Council considered the accessibility of its current site and various options available to improve accessibility. In light of the low usage of the site, it was considered that many of the possible improvements were cost prohibitive and would place an unnecessary financial burden on the Council. The Council **agreed** therefore that the Parish Council website would carry an accessibility statement announcing it to be partially compliant in line with expectations for a small parish council.

11. Future Meetings:

The Council discussed the format of meetings in the coming months. It was expected that the current legislation to meet electronically was unlikely to change, therefore the Council **agreed** that it would continue using the Zoom platform which would need to be upgraded to make the Council fully compliant with accessibility, allowing those without internet access to join the meetings by telephone. The cost of a ZOOM subscription could be shared with other PCs and would be £12 every 6 months.

12. Community Resilience Flood Project:

The Chair informed the Council that an application has been submitted to join the Community Resilience Pathfinder Project run by Northamptonshire County Council. This project is aimed at developing resilience in dealing with surface water flooding resulting from heavy rainfall and offers support with civil engineering advice and contingency planning.

13. Copyholder's Field:

The Chair informed the Council that lawyers had written on behalf of the Trustees of The Cottingham cum Middleton Copyholders to the occupants of the Travellers Site requesting that the newly erected fence be removed. Arrangements are ongoing with the land transfer as are plans to plant trees on the site for coppicing in future years.

Signed.....Chair

Date.....

14. Planning:**20/00298/HHA Camsdale Walk Single Storey Side Extension**

The Council considered the documentation and was fully supportive of this application

Travellers Site, Ashley Road

The Council considered that the number of caravans currently on the site was in breach of existing planning regulations. It agreed to raise this concern with the Corby Borough Council Planning Enforcement Officer and to find out what enforcement measures have been put in place so far (*action SB*).

15. Finance:

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

101601	Joe's Lawn Care – Orchard Maintenance	98.00
101602	Clerk – Salary and Expenses	358.31
101603	Steve Morphy – Grass Cutting	620.00
101604	Jamie Bradshaw – Culvert Maintenance	120.00
101605	Curtis Website Design – Maintenance Charge	100.00
101606	NCALC – Training	44.00
101607	Community Heartbeat Trust – Emergency Phone Rental	72.00

Receipts

None

SUMMARY OF BALANCES

National Savings	5,180.09
Business Reserve	167.16
Community Account	8,340.61
Total:	£13,687.86

b) The Council unanimously **approved** the bank reconciliation which was then duly signed by the Chair.

16. Correspondence:

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

NCALC – Invitation to AGM 3rd October

NCALC Local Government Reform Event Q & A Session

17. Dissemination of Information:

It was agreed that the Chair would draft and circulate a piece for the next newsletter summarising the Council's activities since lock down (*action SB*).

Those residents which haven't already and wish to receive information by email, please contact Jane Smith on jane@le.com.

18. Business for next meeting:

Nothing identified at present. PC Joe Devlin to be put on the agenda circulation list

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.43 pm

Minutes to be ratified at the next Parish Council Meeting on Tuesday 20th October 2020

Signed.....Chair Date.....