

# MIDDLETON PARISH COUNCIL

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The Meeting of the Parish Council was held on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> December 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 and Hicks and Mrs Medwell (Parish Clerk).

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1. To Approve Apologies for Absence:

Cllr Thomas who was not well.

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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.

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3. Minutes: The minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2020 were duly approved and will be signed by the Clerk on behalf of the Chair.

Proposed Cllr Hicks      Seconded Cllr Freeman

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4. Matters Arising not covered on the Agenda:

There were no matters arising not covered on the agenda.

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5. Meeting open for public consultation.

There were no members of the public present.

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6. Orchard and Open Space:

The Chair advised the Council that the gardener who had been working at 37 Main Street had assessed and quoted £250 for the work to cut back the overgrown vegetation in the fenced off area between the Orchard and 37 Main Street. At the same time he had offered to monitor and treat any re-growth with a suitably robust herbicide, for £30 a month. The Council **agreed** the quote to cut back and for regular monitoring for the months of March to September during the forthcoming year.

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7. Highways, Lighting and Rights of Way:

**Village Sign** – The Council referred to the quote of £560.00 from the specialist painter for the refurbishment of the village sign. The Council felt this was cost prohibitive at the present time and **agreed** not to pursue the refurbishment but to look at tidying up the base and planting it out in the Spring. Cllr Freeman drew the Council's attention to the overgrown Cottingham/Middleton sign at the corner of Glover Court and offered to cut this back to improve visibility of the sign (*action TF*).

**Purchase of Strimmer** – The Council discussed the possibility of purchasing a 'parish strimmer' in order to assist in the maintenance of parish footpaths. It considered the various models of strimmer sourced by Cllr Freeman and **agreed** to purchase the Makita cordless model for £171.80.

**Litter** – The Council was pleased to note the number of volunteers offering to clear the litter from the two villages and surrounding lanes on a regular basis and discussed purchasing further litter picking equipment. It was **agreed** to contact Corby Borough Council in the short term to inquire whether the Council could obtain some equipment on loan from the Borough before committing to purchase any more (*action JM*).

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8. Safety Review of Parish Assets:

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

Signed.....Chair

Date.....

The Clerk had checked the defibrillator and recorded the inspection on the Webnos site.

#### 9. Cottingham Neighbourhood Plan:

The Chair thanked all Councillors for reviewing the Cottingham Neighbourhood Plan and for their comments which had been collated into a formal response to Cottingham Parish Council.

The matter of the parish boundary had proved problematic for Cottingham PC as Corby BC had insisted on using a map showing the boundary between Cottingham and Middleton as falling within the Orchard rather than down the centre of the road into Glover Court which was the boundary in practice. The Chair of CPC had committed to taking the issue up again with Corby BC and to amending the text of the Plan.

#### 10. Monthly Crime Report:

The Council was disappointed to note that no response had been received from PCSO Joe Devlin regarding the concerns expressed by the two Parish Councils on the growing number of reports of antisocial behaviour across both Middleton and Cottingham and the request for advice and attendance at a zoom meeting with the Chairs from the two Councils. The Chair will follow this up with a more senior representative from Northants Police Team (*action SB*).

As always, the Council urged residents to be vigilant and to report any incidents of theft or criminal damage, however small, to the police by calling 101.

#### 11. Copyholder's Field:

There was nothing further to report on this item.

#### 12. Planning:

##### **20/00458/COU Residential Site for 6 Caravans, land south of Oakley Park**

In light of the considerable strength of feeling regarding this application within this and surrounding parishes the Council **agreed** to commission an independent planning consultancy to consider the application. The Council approved a quote of £400 from Groves Town Planning Ltd for this service.

The Council considered this application and made the following summary points

- The application has a number of crucial inaccuracies/errors/omissions. The location of the site is in fact very close to a stream which feeds the Welland, the site is surrounded by hedges and trees and there is a lack of detail on the boundary treatment at the gateway. There is no attempt to establish the qualification of the occupiers to meet the statutory definition for gypsies and travellers. These flaws in the application are significant and the access issue is not appropriate to be dealt with through planning conditions.
- The site is on the edge of the Welland Valley flood plain and is also in an area of flood concern identified in the village's Pathfinder Resilience Project. Two streams run either side of the site and run into the Welland. As such it is not appropriate for any development involving significant areas of hard standing and private sewerage arrangements. The existing adjacent site has already exacerbated flooding in the area due to surface water run-off and discharge of waste water onto an adjacent field and endangering a neighbouring dwelling.
- The development is not in keeping with the rural environment. The boundary treatment of two metre-high fence boards is totally inappropriate. A stretch of mature hedging between this site and the existing Oakley Park site has already been removed and the application makes no attempt to maintain or enhance the existing character or biodiversity of this rural landscape.
- The location of the site next to a sewerage works is not an appropriate or healthy location for a new development of any kind for twelve dwellings.

Signed.....Chair

Date.....

- The location is not appropriate in terms of highways considerations. The entrance is close to a sharp bend which is effectively a cross roads given the entrance to Occupation Lane and the Sewerage Works. The driveway would serve potentially 12 dwellings which we understand is not acceptable to the Highways Authority. As the arrangements for the gateway and visibility splays have not been included in the application they cannot be evaluated and we do not consider this a matter appropriate to be dealt with through approval conditions. The two neighbouring gateways are not appropriate for use by vehicles towing touring caravans and do not meet highways requirements in terms of access splays. Compounding this by allowing a third, would be unforgiveable. Pedestrian access to the village from the site is down an unlit narrow road with no verge, no footpath and no speed restrictions – a further development here would be dangerous.
- If this site were approved it would double the number of sites outside our small village (treble the number if the ongoing appeal is upheld) and there is another site at the other end of Cottingham. This number of gypsy/traveller sites surrounding our village would be disproportionate and inappropriate in terms of the size of our village and the impact on it.

The Parish Council requested time to address the Committee when this application is considered.

### **20/00459/NMA 20A Main Street Amendment to approved window/door**

The Council considered and supported this application.

### **Traveller's Site, Ashley Road**

It was noted that the Corby Borough Council enforcement officer had served a Breach of Condition Notice (BOC) on the above site. The compliance period is 6 months from 11 December 2020 and demands the removal all static and mobile homes from the site apart from the 3 in total as approved by the planning permission and all touring caravans from the site apart from the 3 in total as approved by the planning permission.

### **13. Heads of the River Steering Group:**

The Chair reported from a recent meeting of the Heads of the River Steering Group coordinated by the Welland Rivers Trust. Participants had attended from Middleton, Cottingham, Gretton, Great Easton and Allexton. Various projects had been discussed including the identification of landowners along the River Welland within each Parish, appointing a river warden and mapping water sources in the two villages. The Chair advised that there may be monies available from the group to analyse water sources that are suspected of contamination.

### **14. Finance:**

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

101618	Clerk – Salary and Expenses	366.41
101619	Besthost – Website	17.25
101620	Community Heartbeat Trust – Defib Annual Charge	151.20
101621	Jamie Bradshaw – Culvert Maintenance	60.00
101622	Groves Town Planning – Professional Fees	400.00

### **SUMMARY OF BALANCES**

National Savings	5,180.09
Business Reserve	167.16
Community Account	5,312.86
<b>Total:</b>	<b>£10,660.11</b>

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

Signed.....Chair

Date.....

15. Correspondence:

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

NCALC – eUpdates

CBC – Safer Corby Team Updates

NCC Highways – Notification of Local Works

Wilbarston PC – Update on Community Bus Service

Local Resident – Praise for Parish Council

16. Dissemination of Information:

Those residents which haven't already and wish to receive information by email, please contact Jane Smith on [jane@le.com](mailto:jane@le.com) . The Clerk undertook to ensure that she is on Jane Smith's circulation list asking for Newsletter items and to update the information on the Vice Chair for the Newsletter (*action JM*).

17. Business for next meeting:

None identified at present

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.01 pm

Minutes to be ratified at the next Parish Council Meeting on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Signed.....Chair

Date.....