

# **MIDDLETON PARISH COUNCIL**

The Annual Meeting of the Parish was held on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2023 at 6.30 pm in Cottingham and Middleton Village Hall Annex.

Present: Cllrs Coughlan (Chair), Cole, Boucher and Thomas, Mrs Medwell (Clerk) and Police Liaison Representative Del Robertson.

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## **1. To approve apologies for absence:**

Cllr Denton

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## **2. Chair's Annual Report 2022-23**

The following report was presented by Cllr Coughlan

"Middleton Parish Council (MPC) has seen several changes this year with Leigh Morrell stepping down as Vice Chair and resigning her position on the Parish Council, Stuart Appleby resigning as a Councillor, Alan Cole stepping into the Vice Chair role and Caroline Boucher joining the Parish Council in February 2023. The Parish Council is now currently operating at two people down (currently 5 councillors) and whilst it is managing well it continues to advertise the positions locally.

### **Platinum Jubilee Celebrations**

June 2022 saw the village celebrate the Platinum Jubilee for Queen Elizabeth II. A weekend of events was organised with the help of Councillors and Clerks from both Middleton and Cottingham Parish Councils. The weekend included a successful beacon lighting on the Thursday, tea with the alpacas on the Friday, street parties on the Saturday and the Big Lunch held on the village green and in the Annex on Sunday June 5<sup>th</sup>. Despite the inclement weather conditions on the Sunday the villages pulled out all the stops and a fantastic afternoon was enjoyed by all. Thanks to all who helped organise this successful weekend!

### **Proclamation of King Charles III**

Sadly, on 8 September 2022 Queen Elizabeth II passed away. Middleton and Cottingham Parish Councils' jointly organised "Operation London Bridge" plans immediately kicked in with 10 days of public mourning in the village. A book of condolence was placed in the village shop, Parish Council wreaths of remembrance were laid by the flagpole outside the village shop, the flag flew at half-mast for 10 days, being raised at the appropriate time for the Proclamation, a place to lay flowers of remembrance along the Orchard wall was communicated to the residents and the Chair of Middleton Parish Council read out the Proclamation of King Charles III on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2022. Members of Middleton Parish Council together with Cottingham Parish Council are now planning an event to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III to be held on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

### **Planning**

Several planning applications for properties in Middleton submitted in 2022/23 have been reviewed without comment from Middleton Parish Council.

There are however three retrospective applications that MPC objected to in 2021 which have now gone to appeal with the Planning Inspectorate. Gypsy and Traveller sites at Oakley Park, Oakley Park South and Peasdale Hill. The date for the Oakley Park appeals (both sites) is now set for 25 April 2023 and the Peasdale Hill date is still to be set by PINs, likely to be after June 2023).

It should be noted that both the Oakley Park appeals are not now being contested by North Northants Council (NNC). This is extremely disappointing news. NNC's intention not to defend these appeals was received by MPC on 15 December 2022. MPC made it very clear in a communication sent back to NNC Senior Management and the Planning Dept on the 15<sup>th</sup> December 2022 that both MPC and residents were extremely unhappy with this decision and in this communication MPC sought reassurance that if the appeals were granted by PINs, NNC would take all proper and appropriate action to any breaches of conditions set. The local MP Tom Pursglove has been kept abreast of all communications with NNC regarding this matter by

the Chair of MPC and he has made his disappointment on NNC's decision known to the CEO of NNC, Rob Bridge. Dialogue regarding this issue with Tom Pursglove continues. The Chair of MPC is also working with the local resident's action group (RAG) who are continuing to contest the Oakley Park South appeal by written representation to the Planning Inspectorate without the backing of NNC.

NNC has indicated that they do still intend to continue to defend the Peasdale Hill appeal and MPC and RAG are continuing to liaise and communicate with NNC Planning Officers regarding this appeal.

### **Gypsy and Traveller Update Meetings with North Northants Council**

In 2021 Middleton Parish Council championed and set up regular Gypsy and Traveller update meetings with Senior Officers and Ward Councillors from North Northants Council. These meetings continue to take place on a quarterly basis with attendance by Chairs from several local parish councils including Middleton, Loddington, Braybrooke and Broughton. Regular updates are given by NNC Senior Management and Planning Officers on progress concerning the GTAA update, 5-year land supply, site allocations policy, and unauthorised site planning appeals/enforcement. Dialogue continues with NNC on this important issue.

### **Aggressive and Loose Dogs**

There have been several incidents of Livestock worrying, loose dogs on the roads and aggressive behaviour from dogs in the village reported by residents over the last year. MPC has requested that any incidents of this kind be reported to the NNC environmental team and if people feel in any danger, then they report such incidents to the police. Instructions on how to do this have been issued by MPC via the Middleton Residents WhatsApp Group several times.

Two meetings regarding these issues with dogs were held with local MP, Tom Pursglove, NNC Officers, Ward Councillors, MPC, RAG and residents on 1 July and 2 December 2022. CPW (Community Protection Warning) notices have now been issued to the owners of the dogs by NNC. MPC continues to ask residents to report issues and will keep a regular dialogue with NNC officers and the local police regarding this matter.

### **Flood Resilience**

Due to the risk of flash flooding and the inclement weather conditions MPC continues to work with NNC to ensure that all the drains at the bottom of Main Street at the junction with the Hill, all drains up the Hill and at the top of the village at the Triangle are kept unblocked. These drains were all unblocked by NNC with their Jet Blast equipment in January 2023. Flood barriers purchased last year by MPC are also in situ behind Rockingham Wheelers club house to protect properties in Middleton should a flash flood situation ever arise.

### **Footpath Warden Report**

Mr Wayne Summerfield is now regularly walking all the marked footpaths throughout Middleton and reporting back any issues he finds to NNC.

### **Welland Wanderer Bus Service**

MPC continues to contribute to this service to ensure that the Welland Wander bus service continues to run for as long as possible. It is likely that this service will end at some point towards the end of 2023 unless further funding is secured from NNC.

### **The Orchard, Culvert and Obelisk, Glover Court area**

MPC has now employed the services of a new landscape gardener, Joe McCole, from Caldecott to maintain the Culvert, Obelisk and Orchard areas of Middleton village. The work carried out to date has been of an exceptional standard, with a few communications praising how good these areas now look received from residents of the village. MPC will continue to contract this work to Mr McCole on a regular basis."

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### **3. Accounting Statement 2022-23.**

The Clerk presented a statement of financial accounts and reported that the balance of reserves as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 totalled £7,667.23.

The full End of Year Accounts can be found on the Parish Council website at [www.middleton-northants-pc.gov.uk](http://www.middleton-northants-pc.gov.uk)

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#### 4. Footpath Warden Report:

The following report was provided by Mr Summerfield

GS1/GS7

From the lane leads onto the 22-footer to the dead-end path and alongside the sewage plant (GS7).

28th January all clear.

GS4 - Crossing the old railway line.

11 February all clear.

GS6 - Footpath from the right side of the brook leading to Drayton.

11 February all clear.

GS8 - Footpath from the last gate of the farm to East Carlton Park to the ponds.

18th February all clear.

GS11 - From the kissing gate and along the tunnel hedgerow to the bungalow gate at school hill.

18th February all clear.

GS10 - Left to school hill to the end of the lane.

18th February all clear.

GS15 - Style from the bungalow to the road B670 to Corby Road.

18th February all clear.

GS12/GS13/GS14 - From the road (B670) to the Market Harborough Road (A427) to Middleton Lodge Farm and along to Kingswood School area.

25 February all clear.

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#### 5. Open Forum:

There were no members of the public present.

Meeting closed at 6.44 pm.