

**Minutes of a Meeting of Middleham Town Council held in Middleham Key Centre on Wednesday, 26 June 2019 at 7.00 pm. (SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT NEXT COUNCIL MEETING)**

**Present**

Chairman Cllr Mrs S Fairhurst, Cllr Mrs H Byford, Cllr Mrs L Stocker, Cllr Mr S Wheeler and Cllr Mr N Hopper.

Clerk, Mr D Keep

Members of the public present as shown on the attached attendance sheet.

**Action**

**1. Open Forum.**

The Chairman reminded those present that public participation was permitted at the start of a meeting only and was limited to 15 minutes. Questions or statements would be restricted to items on the agenda and any matters not on the agenda should have been raised in advance.

A resident asked whether moss and other weeds could be cleared from the cobbles outside no's 1-6 Castle Hill which did not appear to have been sprayed recently. Councillors replied that the grounds contractor had been asked to provide an estimate. It was also confirmed that if re-grouting was required, this would be arranged following the annual inspection. It was agreed to try and complete the work before the Open Gardens day at the weekend.

**Clerk**

**2. Apologies.**

Apologies were received from Cllr Mr M Cade and Cllr Mr G Fortune.

**3. Declarations of interest regarding items on the agenda.**

Cllr Byford declared an interest in agenda item 11.2.1 as a near neighbour to the application. No other interests other than those previously notified were declared in matters on the agenda.

**4. Minutes.**

**4.1 Minutes of the previous council meetings**

**IT WAS RESOLVED to accept the minutes of the Council meeting held on 15 May 2019 and, subject to amendment, those of 18 June 2019 as a true and accurate record to be signed by the Chairman.**

**4.2 The schedule of agreed actions.** A detailed review of all outstanding actions was undertaken.

**4.3 Report of Annual Town meeting on 22 May 2019.** The Mayor reported a relatively small turn out which was disappointing as the reports by Cllr Sedgwick and Cllr Byford had been informative. Cllr Byford would summarise her report for the website so that more people were aware of the Safer Roads Project.

**Cllr Byford**

**Action**

**5. Confidential and Urgent Items.** There were no urgent or confidential matters for consideration at the current meeting requiring recording in the confidential minute.

**6. Appointment of Councillor and Council Committees:**

**6.1 Co-option of Councillor.** The Chairman welcomed Cllr Nigel Hopper. He was encouraged to undertake any training that he felt was necessary and the Clerk would forward details of available courses.

**Clerk****6.2 Council Committees**

**6.2.1 MSCWA representative (Sports & Recreation).** Cllr Wheeler.

**6.2.2 Footpaths and Byelaws;** Following discussion whether this post was necessary as several Councillors regularly walked the paths, it was agreed to continue and Cllr Stocker would carry on the role.

**6.2.3 Planning and Conservation:** Cllr Byford.

**6.2.4 Representatives to attend local YLCA branch meetings;** Cllr Fairhurst and the Clerk; Any Councillor to attend when the Clerk was unavailable.

**6.2.5 Finance Committee (comprising 3 Cllrs).** Cllrs Cade, Fortune and Hopper.

**6.2.6 Burial Ground.** Cllr Wheeler

**6.2.7 Other Committees.** After discussion it was agreed that no other committees or specialisms were required.

**7. Town Council - Information/Decision Required**

**7.1 Councillors' report of meetings attended and actions undertaken since the previous meeting.** Cllr Byford reported her attendance at meetings convened by the governing body for the federated schools in Middleham and Spennithorne after the recent Ofsted inspection and resignations of staff. The GB was seeking to maintain a presence in both communities however they were faced with falling rolls and the possibility that both would go into deficit (one school was already). The proposed solution was to split the classes across locations and that pupils would be bussed to the other site as required, proposals that had concerned parents at both meetings.

**7.2 Land Management Issues (standing item).**

**7.2.1 Large agricultural vehicles turning in the Busks.** A helpful response from the contractor was noted. It was agreed to write to the contractor to see if an accommodation could be reached whereby permission to turn large vehicles be granted by Council for a fixed number of days per year, provided any damage to the grass was made good. Council recognised that there was an increased risk of accidents and congestion if large farm vehicles had to drive into town and turn in the market square.

**Clerk**

**7.2.2 Maintenance of hedges and open areas on the Plantations.** It was agreed to ask Cllr Fortune to discuss a plan and costings with Mr Robertson and to consult nearby residents on their views. The project could be publicised in an edition of the Middleham Herald.

**Clerk/ GF**

**7.2.3 Park Lane parking.** Residents had been warned by Police that they could be fined for parking on the pavements. A proposal to provide additional parking on grassed areas in the close and near the School had been discussed previously but no agreement reached as RDC would not fund any of the necessary works, for example lowering kerbs. The Clerk would recirculate earlier replies from the emergency services which were not entirely supportive of moves to improve access. The Clerk would check whether the Council had a statutory power to carry out the works at its own expense.

**Clerk****Clerk**

**7.3 Council Objectives for 2019-20.** The following were proposed and agreed:

- Burial ground
- Play area improvements
- Improved footpath access from St Alkelda's Road to Park Lane (between the play areas).
- New town guide leaflet (to be discussed at September's meeting).

**Action**

It was noted that some of projects might receive funding from any community infrastructure levy payable by developers in St Alkelda's, although this would be paid to the District Council and may not be allocated totally tot Middleham.

**7.4 Chairman's Allowance.** No request was made.

**7.5 Lifestyle Challenge.** This was noted to be a scheme to encourage projects run by and for 10 to 17 year olds and supported by the Police and other agencies. Cllr Byford agreed to look into it.

**Cllr Byford**

**7.6 Green Spaces Consultation.** Although the spaces suggested for registration, were thought to have secured futures, it was felt worthwhile to include them in the consultation. It was noted that the registration scheme was primarily aimed at smaller areas within built-up area.

**Clerk**

**7.7 Council Office Upgrading computer software and change of Broadband supplier.** A local IT company was setting up an @middlehamcouncil.co.uk email address with increased Outlook storage and a solution was expected shortly.

**8. Review of Health & Safety and Environmental Matters (standing item).** There were none at the current time. The play area inspection reports had not been received in time.

**9. Project Updates:**

**9.1 Burial Ground.** No progress to report at the current time.

**9.2 MSCWA.** A management committee meeting had been held. A bank balance of approximately £3k was a considerable improvement over the previous year.

**9.3 Welcome Sign.** Cllrs agreed that they preferred a 'Newmarket' style notice. The Clerk would investigate getting one designed and liaise with suppliers for costings. Cllr Byford would look into the feasibility, including locations which would be inside the 30mph zones on each of the rods leading through Middleham. An approach could then be made to trainers.

**Clerk  
Cllr Byford**

**9.4 Option agreement.** No progress to report at the current time.

**9.5 Middleham Safer Roads project.** Cllr Byford reported that there had been a slight lull in communications and activity. She would be chasing NYCC regarding installation of the crossing points.

**9.6 Play area improvements:** A committee meeting would shortly be held.

**9.7 Town Guide.** It was agreed not to proceed at the current time and defer until later in the year.

**10. Events in Middleham (standing item)**

**10.1 Richard III Festival.** Cllr Byford reported that a review with some of the Ricardian groups was required to see whether an event could be successfully held in a future year. It was disappointing that English Heritage appeared not to want to support a relatively local event, even though it would benefit from increased ticket sales at the castle.

**11. Planning****11.1 Planning decision notices received since the last meeting:**

11.1.1 Full planning permission for conversion of barn to form 1 no. local occupancy dwelling/holiday let at Braegill, Agglethorpe DL8 4TN (ref R/60/39) **GRANTED**

11.1.2 Listed Building Consent for Change of Use from a Restaurant and One Bedroom Flat to a Two Bedroom Dwelling and Minor Internal Alterations at The Stable Door, Market Place, Middleham DL8 4NP (ref 19/00144/LBC) **GRANTED.**

**11.2 Planning Applications.**

11.2.1 Full Planning Permission for Change of Use from a B8 Barn to a C3 Dwelling in a Conservation Area, Kent Cottage Middleham DL8 4PF (ref 19/00207/FULL). **No comments.**

11.2.2 Full Planning Permission for Erection of Rear Extension Incorporating Dormer Extension at Green Acres Park Lane Middleham DL8 4QY (ref 19/00379) **No comments.**

**11.3 Potential Planning Enforcement Issues.** No matters to report.

## **12. Finance – Information/Decision required**

**12.1** Cash books with a full bank reconciliations as at 31 May 2019 had been circulated in advance of the meeting

**IT WAS RESOLVED to approve the schedule of direct debits and internet bank transfers to approve and ratify all payments since the last Meeting as set out on the payments schedule and to approve Items of Expenditure as submitted to the meeting, including the following:**

### **12.2 Annual Accounts for Year Ended 31 March 2019.**

A copy of the draft annual return (officially known as Annual Governance & Accountability Return' or 'AGAR') and various other documents referred to below had been circulated prior to the meeting. Also distributed were summary sheets showing the transactions for TC that supported the AGAR.

The Clerk drew attention to the following matters:

- Council was eligible to be exempt from the requirements for external audit (officially referred to as a 'limited assurance review') as it fulfilled the criteria set out within the exemption certificate on page 3 of the AGAR, principally that neither its gross income nor expenditure exceeded £25k. Accordingly it was not required to submit its AGAR to the external auditor but must make certain disclosures on its website in compliance with the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities.
- There was a prescribed order for consideration of the accounts set out in Instructions relating to AGAR.

**12.3 Report of the Internal Auditor.** A 'clean' report had been received and the Internal Auditor had signed page 4 of the return.

**12.4 Annual Governance Statement.** Having considered each individual assertion, a 'yes' response was agreed in each case. The annual governance statement was approved.

**12.5 Bank Reconciliation Statement.** The Clerk confirmed that this document reconciled with the Cash Book as at 31 March 2019, adjusted to exclude transactions on behalf of IH.

### **12.6 Accounting Statements for 2018-19.**

#### **12.7 The meeting considered the Accounting Statements as a whole**

**12.8** After careful consideration and having been proposed by Cllr Byford and seconded by Cllr Wheeler **IT WAS RESOLVED** to approve the Accounting Statements and that they be signed and dated by the Mayor presiding at the meeting.

**12.9 Dates for exercise of public rights (inspection period).** These had been drafted by the Clerk and were noted and approved.

**12.10 Explanation of variances.** The explanations were noted and approved.

**12.11** The Chairman and Clerk were authorised to sign off the relevant paperwork and the Clerk was instructed to make the necessary arrangements for submitting the Exemption Certificate electronically to the external auditor and liaise with Cllr Stocker to place the required documents onto the Council's website for public inspection.

Clerk

Clerk

On behalf of the Council, the Chairman thanked the Clerk for his oversight of the annual return process

**12.12 Asset register as at 31 March 2019.** A copy of the asset register was received for information and is attached to these minutes.

**12.13 Internal Audit Fee.** The payment of the agreed sum of £150 to Kim Duke Accounting Services had been approved at a previous meeting. The Clerk would seek

Clerk

**Action**

agreement with Ms Duke that she would continue for a further year.

**12.14 Section 137 Local Government Act Expenditure Limits 2019/20.** For noting:  
This is £8.12 per registered elector (2018: £7.86) which for Middleham is approximately  
£5,000 for the current year

**12.15 Higher interest bank accounts.** The Barclays account had now been closed and  
the Clerk would make arrangements for the necessary transfers to the deposit accounts

**13. Central & Local Government Communications: Documents that have been  
emailed or circulated to Cllrs since the last meeting.**

13.1.1 None

**14. Shared information and suggested items for the next agenda**

**14.1** Annual planner for agenda items. Noted

**14.2** Transfer of unspent expenditure to reserves.

**14.3** Transfer of balances to IH.

**Date and time of the next meetings: The next monthly meeting would be the  
Council meeting on 31 July 2019. Cllr Cade has submitted an apology.**

**There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at  
9.05pm**

**Signed.....Date.....**