

Middlezoy Parish Council

Parish Clerk: Mrs Jacqueline Strong, 178 Burnham Road, Highbridge, TA9 3EH
Mobile: 07864 051315

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 16th February 2021 at 7:30pm via Zoom

Present: Cllrs. Paul Baker, Aviva Morris, Ann Lipscombe, Florence Roulson and Will Hawkins

In attendance: Jacqui Strong (Clerk), Cllr. Anthony Betty, PCSO Georgia Coles and 7 members of the public

Public Discussion: State of roads in poor condition at the moment, 3 out of 4 of the roads into the village are dangerous to cyclists due to the amount of mud and overall condition.

Concerns raised about the height of land and gateway at Cutley Farm. The land was purchased several years ago and planning to level the land for horses – was passed. There are problems between Middlezoy and Othery but enforcement and county council are reluctant do to anything as planning for the land height was approved. Would press coverage raise the profile of this situation. The land has been elevated significantly and there is still more to go.

The Westonzoyland back road by Darby's farm and Holloway Road, dangerous.

023/21/MPC Apologies

No apologies

024/21/MPC Declaration of Interest in items on the agenda and dispensations granted

No declaration of interest received.

025/21/MPC Councillor Vacancies

2 Vacancies still available, any interested parties encouraged to contact the clerk.

026/21/MPC Receive and approve minutes as circulated

Minutes **received and approved** of Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 19th January 2021

027/21/MPC Report received from Chairman

Thank you email received from the village shop for the grant for the frontage. Decision about the May Annual Parish Council Meeting and the Annual Parish Meeting need to take place, the latter allows for local organisations in the village to attend an open evening to showcase what they have achieved and promote any plans for the future. This could act as a method to recruit new

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members. Cllr. Ann Lipscombe to start organising for week including 1st June depending on the Covid restrictions at the time. The parish meeting should occur between 1st March and 1st June but with the current situation this may alter, allowing for re-arranging at a later date if necessary. Please note that around the village there are a number of walkers at the moment who are exercising from other areas – villagers reminded to remain vigilant.

028/21/MPC Report received from County Councillor David Huxtable

Report: Circulated to all councillors and clerk to display on website.

029/21/MPC Report received from District Councillor Anthony Betty

Report: Business grants given out totaling £2.1 million, staff are supporting the vaccination programme and Mr Bob Brown has been recruited as the Chief Executive replacing Alison Griffin.

030/21/MPC Report from police or emergency services

Georgia Coles PCSO for Middlezoy after 8 years in Taunton, previous experience of youth projects but new challenges now of a rural nature. 44 crimes reported in January and varied nature across the entire area Puriton – Middlezoy. Report received of 4 incidents for Middlezoy in the last month 3 car crashes and 1 fly tipping at Greylake Nature Reserve. Most people are sticking to the rules but there have been fines given out to people from out of area. A couple of burglaries across the area so do remain vigilant.

031/21/MPC Report – Environment and Conservation

The council received update from Simon Phelps from the Levels Climate Forum attended on behalf of the council, lots of councils represented from South Somerset, interested in splitting across districts, main focus on electricity panels and improvement in transport. Useful contacts made and South Somerset have an active group. Sedgemoor have now also set up their own group which will enable closer links with the district council. Not a lot directly impacting on Middlezoy but carbon footprint studies were discussed which may be useful in the future. The village network is progressing nicely, the brief has been written for the council tender and tree planting should be able to happen next winter, orchard is up and running and planted at the allotments. Progress with the Church and a package of measures submitted to the committee, including hedgerow and wildflower meadow. Somerset Wildlife Trust agreed to work with the group and send letters out with resources to help villagers from home, website link available. Parish Council triangles near the church and on the main road which needs to be kept short for safety/visibility, the Church triangle could be left as a wildflower meadow style area.

Cllr Hawkins will update the Tree Committee that the invoice will be paid with an surplus funds to be ring fenced for any future projects linked to the environment.

Comment made about the verges being driven over particularly near the allotment and the effect on the bio-diversity. Wrecking the village, highways will not repair the edge as likely to lose the verge altogether, could we have an awareness campaign to discourage this type of destruction and to encourage people to take pride in their village.

032/21/MPC Annual Parish Council Meeting

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The Council noted and **resolved** to agree the date for the Annual Parish Council Meeting of Tuesday 18th May 2021 at 7:30pm following the current latest guidance for meetings from the government.

033/21/MPC Annual Parish Meeting (1st March – 1st June)

The council **resolved** to invite local groups and societies to an event in the village hall (AL).

034/21/MPC Insurance Quote

The council **noted** the insurance quotes received by the clerk and supported the choice offered by Zurich which has been the councils provider, it is also the cheapest.

035/21/MPC Section 137 Limit increase

The council noted the increase per elector for 2021/22 to £8.41 per elector.

036/21/MPC Payments made under delegated responsibility within the budget

Grant paid to Village Shop	£ 500.00
Microsoft Subscription	£ 59.99
Herras Fencing	£ 180.00
Home Office Fixed Payment	£ 100.00

037/21/MPC Payments not in budget requiring approval

The council **resolved** to approve the payments

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Mileage Claim Clerk	£ 12.15
Laptop Service Reimbursement	£ 30.00
Tree Invoice – Village Project (Orchard)	£284.07

038/21/MPC Planning

Items for update:

Application 34/20/00002 – Granted

Merricks Farm Variation of Conditions

Items for decision:

Application 34/20/00013

Full Planning Permission for a single storey extension – Poole Barn, Main Road. The Council **resolved** to approve.

039/21/MPC Affordable Housing update from Steering Group

Due to some parishioner's not having received a housing needs assessment form to complete, the date has been extended by a week. The aim is to find out the number and types of property needed for the village. Once this has been decided the areas of land can be assessed for

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suitability. This is not just down to the parish council but other partner organisations ie: housing providers. Concerns expressed about the time span afforded to have the responses returned, this is in part due to the post room not being able to send out the forms which has shortened the time scale. Could the parish council promote why it should be completed and promote the extension recognizing the importance for the local groups to keep going.

040/21/MPC Highways and Public Rights of Way

Highways Department emailed in relation to Holloway Road, nothing received in response. Discussions about Robert Derby's Farm and the state of the roads in the village – letter to be sent and cc relevant people.

041/21/MPC Village Maintenance

The tender for the village maintenance is currently ongoing and in receipt of 2 partial tenders and 2 pending. The hedge cutting likely to be once every 2 years, the cutting of the grass around the village could be sub-contracted, the cricket club is not in a position to do this due to volunteer demands. The cricket club would like to make sure that the grass isn't cut too short to cause die back which shouldn't be the case but has been a historical problem. Plan to stake out the area not to be cut so that everyone is aware.

042/21/MPC Village Hall

The village hall have uploaded further documents for the grant with Somerset County Council, frustration is being felt as more demands being made for information. Arts festival 10th/11th July cancelled. There will be a dance on the evening of the Saturday 10th and summer fete on Sunday 11th July. Plans being discussed for music events post Covid.

043/21/MPC Correspondence sheet noted

Query about the ball court – should this be closed off, although no gate to the site to stop use. There is a sign warning about safe use and sharing equipment and should be used the same as the play area as a small court area. Council **resolved** to keep it open as not widely used by large groups.

044/21/MPC Date of next meeting is Tuesday 16th March 2021 at 19:30

045/21/MPC Meeting closed at 20:53pm

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