

MIDDLETON PARISH COUNCIL

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The Meeting of the Parish Council was held on Tuesday 14th July 2015 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall Annexe, Cottingham.

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

1. Apologies for Absence: Cllrs Cross and Skipwith, apologies approved.

2. Declaration of Interest: Cllr Freeman declared an interest in Item 6 as a member of the Cottingham Community Shop Management Committee.

3. Minutes: The minutes of the meeting on 16th June 2015 were duly approved and signed.
Proposed Cllr Bradshaw Seconded Cllr Cole

4. Matters Arising:

The consultation event for the Middleton/Cottingham Conservation Area is being planned by Corby BC for September.

5. Meeting Open for Public Participation:

There were no members of the public present.

(Meeting closed to the public.)

6. Contribution to Village Store and Café:

Cllr Freeman informed the Council of the need for more volunteers, the need to pay staff for more hours, a reduction in foot-fall during the summer holidays and a subsequent shortfall in funding. He said that turn-over had improved during the recent 'Use it or Lose it' campaign but the shop now was in danger of becoming unsustainable again. Cllr Freeman said that a recent £50k grant bid had been unsuccessful and asked the Council to consider making an annual contribution of £1,000 to the store. The Council discussed at length the factors contributing to the success of the shop and the importance of encouraging all residents to use the store and cafe. The Council **agreed** that it would be prepared to consider practical moves to support the shop such as holding meetings in the café area. Concern was expressed about commitment to an annual financial contribution but it was suggested that the Council may consider making a smaller one off contribution in relation to a particular item needed by the shop, if Cottingham Parish Council was also prepared to make a contribution. It was noted that the shop had not yet undertaken an audit of its finances despite being publicly funded and that this was something that it would expect to be addressed if the Council was to invest further in the shop.

7. New Village Hall and Recreational Ground:

Cllr Brant reported from the recent meeting of the working group. The revised recreation ground plan had been discussed – it had been agreed to propose a youth size football pitch, a running track and a skate park. The Village Hall had been re-sited to locate it entirely on the Village Acre. The next stage is to present this plan to Sport England, who had raised concerns over the loss of playing field area in the initial scheme. Cllr Brant said the NCC had confirmed that a TRO to move the 30mph sign should be approved once building has commenced and should not hold up the planning application.

8. Orchard and Open Space:

Culvert – The Chair reported that the culvert is now in the process of being treated with weed suppressant. A wasp nest has been found in the ground – the Council **agreed** for this to be eliminated.

Holes had been noted in the grass in the Orchard, perhaps leading to the old mole runs – the Council **agreed** to ask the eliminator about these too. The Council noted that the bushes on the left hand side of the Glover Court entrance had been cut down and that the area looked much better.

9. Highways and Rights of Way:

Speeding – Cllr Brant had circulated an e-mail from Sarah Barnwell of Northants Highways prior to the meeting. This stated that County Highways not been able to complete a draft design, due to pressure of work on a small design team, but had completed some preparatory work. The engineer noted that parked cars seem to be doing the same job as a build out, and conjectured that only a minimal benefit may accrue from any work. To construct a build-out would be likely to cost in the region of £13,000 per build-out and a design fee of around £1,100 would need to be paid in advance. The Council expressed its disappointment with this response and **agreed** to contact County Cllr Heggs who had previously offered to assist in discussions with Northants County Council regarding speed limits.

Community Enhancement Works – The Council observed that the works had been carried out by the Community Enhancement Gang on 7th July to a good standard. Cllr Cole **agreed** to check whether Swinglers Path, which was added to the schedule on the day, had been cleared (*action AC*).

10. Safety Review of Parish Assets:

The Council **agreed** to add the phone box (value £2,800) to the insurance policy under 'street furniture' (*action JM*). The Council discussed carrying out a monthly review of the orchard to ensure that it is fit for purpose and **agreed** for Cllr Cole to carry out this check (*action AC*).

11. Parish Councillor Vacancy:

The Council noted the resignation of Cllr Skipwith from the Council due to the fact he is moving out of the village and thanked him in his absence for his contribution.

The Council **agreed** to co-opt Gina Hicks onto the Council and observed that one casual vacancy still remained which was being advertised on the notice board.

11. Community Defibrillator Project:

Cllr Brant said she had spoken with Rockingham Wheelers and had received information from the Community Heartbeat Trust with regards to the possibility of installing a defibrillator in the phone box on the Main Street / Ashley Road junction. The next stage is to complete a support request form from the charity and to follow up County Councillor Heggs offer to contribute to this project from his 'Community Empowerment Fund' (*action SB and BB*).

12. Planning:

There were no planning applications.

13. Finance:

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

101294	Clerk – Salary and Expenses	218.92
101295	Adam Curtis – New website	295.00
101296	NCALC - Chairmanship Training	39.00
101297	S Morphy – Grass Cutting	370.00
101298	R Thomas – Culvert Maintenance	224.00

101299	BDO – External Audit	120.00
b) Receipts		
Corby Borough Council	Precept	5,993.00
H M Revenue and Customs	Vat Refund	754.20
c) SUMMARY OF BALANCES		
National Savings		55,237.57
Business Reserve		166.31
Community Account		12,619.20
Less Allocation for Village Hall		50,180.50
Total:		<u>17,842.58</u>

d) The External Audit for 2014/15 has been completed with no issues arising. The notice of conclusion of audit is to be displayed on the Parish Council notice board. The Parish Council unanimously **approved** and **accepted** the annual return.

14. Correspondence:

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

NCALC – Chairmanship Training
 CBC – Rural Area Forum Agenda
 NCC – Environment Application for Free Tree Pack

The Council noted that there were no members available to attend the Rural Area Forum Meeting on 16th July – Cllr Brant agreed to send her apologies (*action SB*).

Cllr Brant reminded the Councillors of the Neighbourhood Planning course on 24th August.

15. Business for next meeting:

Bus shelter on Main Street – Identify ownership and whether fit for purpose.
 Review of Grievance and Freedom of Information Procedures

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.00 pm

Minutes to be ratified at the next meeting on Tuesday 15th September 2015

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

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