**MIDDLETON STONEY PARISH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL ON MONDAY 4TH NOVEMBER 2019 AT 7.30 PM.**

**PRESENT:**

Prof. Lee Chair

Mrs. D. Pay Vice-Chair

Mr. Fulljames

Ms. Makari

Mr. Rees

Mr. A. Grenfell

Mr. Champion [From Item 4]

M. Keighery Clerk

**1] APOLOGIES:**

There were no apologies.

**2] DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS:**

 There were no interests declared.

 **3] MINUTES:**

 The minutes of the meeting of 9th September 2019 were approved.

**4] MATTERS ARISING:**

**Co-option of Councillor:**

After being nominated by Professor Lee and seconded by Mrs. Pay, Mr. Champion was formally co-opted onto the parish council with immediate effect.

* **Policy Development on Traffic & Environmental Plan:**

Members discussed progress with regard to the policy formulation regarding traffic. In particular, their discussions on Slack. Ms. Makari highlighted her pleasure that the council was being more pro-active rather than reactive as in the past. She gave a brief history of the problems of dealing with OCC over last two years and the dialogue with Cllr. Corkin. She stressed that other villages had been more successful at getting solutions to traffic problems.

Mr. Rees distributed to members copies of the documents he has been compiling – Middleton Stoney at a Crossroads and also Traffic Calming Options.[Appendices 1& 2]. The latter also includes local examples of where such options have been employed and which council would be responsible.

Mr Rees explored the various options that the parish council could do such as ‘20 is plenty’ which is very cost effective. Also he highlighted how neighbouring villages have slowed traffic by pushing their exit gates closer together which makes traffic slow down and would send a signal to OCC about what the parish council is prepared to do. Members were less keen on speed bumps as they thought they are noisy relative to other options.

Mr Fulljames stressed that such traffic problems have been going on since at least 1971 and it was difficult to compare Middleton Stoney with other villages, but he hoped that it could be made more difficult for cars to come through the village. However, he felt ultimately the only remedy to the traffic problems was a relief road.

Mr. Champion asked what the main priority was for the parish council - is it speed or is it volume? He also recommended the colour coding of roads as it has been shown that this can slow down traffic. He also proposed that lorries coming from Ardley should not be able to turn right.

Mr. Grenfell suggested ‘Rumble-strips’ as a half-way house measure. He also said he would explore the costs of using vehicle activated signs as a deterrent. Mr. Grenfell reported that he had researched the ideas of the consultancy group, Hamilton Bailey, especially their advocacy of removing traffic lights in areas. Mr. Champion recalled that in the past the same group had offered advice to the parish council but they had admitted that the situation at Middleton Stoney was challenging.

Ms. Makari agreed but stressed the importance of resolving the outstanding issues with OCC of the informal consultation and the HGV and points restriction on the Bicester Road. She insisted that local traffic is fine but routeing arrangements would be needed to deal with other traffic. She also proposed the use of softer environment features such of planters, the regular cutting of grass and getting rid of urban signs, making road users know they are entering a village. Mr Rees agreed that the parish council needed to care more effectively for its environment.

Professor Lee stressed the importance of being proactive to these traffic problems. He also reported that if the Great Wolf Development is passed in Chesterton, the company is likely to spend lots of money on nearby infrastructure, but he is happy for the parish council to invest in traffic solutions and could look into sponsorship.

Professor Lee finalised the discussion by ensuring members that he would draw up a statement and consultation plan within the next month.

* **Great Wolf Theme Park Development:**

Professor Lee reported back from recent meetings at Chesterton regarding the proposed development. A barrister has been advising Chesterton Parish Council and has warned it will be difficult to stop, but if it does go ahead the company will probably finance major infrastructure projects in the area. He has also advised residents to place their objections in writing. Thus a template has been devised for residents to use when needed.

MSPC will continue to support Chesterton Parish Council’s opposition to the development and will continue to seek to mitigate the potential repercussions on Middleton Stoney. Furthermore, Mr. Rees will be representing MSPC on the overall umbrella group.

* **Village Defibrillator :**

Mr. Grenfell informed members that that the lottery application for the defibrillator was ultimately unsuccessful. Therefore, the approximate cost of around £2000 for the equipment and storage will have to be met elsewhere. Consequently, Mr. Grenfell suggested speaking to Simon Pettit at the cricket club to explore alternative funding. He also informed members that the British Heart Foundation insist that the defibrillator is unlocked as part of their conditions to support an application. However, if it was agreed that the unit should be locked, simply by phoning ‘999’ users can acquire the security code to unlock the device.

**5] FINANCE:**

The clerk sent up-to-date accounts to members in the Finance Report.

Clerk confirmed that since the September meeting, the General Fund had received the second instalment of the Precept [£1925] and interest [£3.93]. The fund had made payments of £150.00[Website].

There was only one transaction in the VHMF in the period as the fire service of [£60] had been paid.

In the Playground Account, the annual inspection had been paid. [£82.20].

The clerk also informed prior to the January meeting, he will be sending the Precept recommendations to members.

**6] VE DAY, MAY 2020**

Prof. Lee reported that he hoped that the council would take a full part in the commeriations and so he was open to any ideas and suggestions. He would also be consulting with interested parties and parishioners.

**7] EXTERNAL MEETINGS:**

Mr. Fulljames attended the reshaped Viridor meetings- the first away from the site – on September 30th at Ardley Village Hall. With this new format, he stressed that it had been generally a positive meeting although Viridor had reported an on-going problem with the electricity generator which has affected throughput. It was also accepted that routeing agreements in the area are still being flouted.

There are invites for the forthcoming meetings:

Joint Parishes Meeting on 13th November at Bodicote House. Ms. Pay and Mr. Rees will attend.

Cherwell – A Thriving Economy workshop, 12th November at the Upper Heyford Heritage Centre

ROSPA Play Safety Conference – on 5th December at the Birmingham Metropole.

**8] PLAYGROUND:**

The clerk reported that he had sent Mrs. O’Dwyer the notification of the ROSPA conference in December.

The clerk would also enquiry whether the recommendations made in the inspection report were already known by the playground team.

**9] VILLAGE HALL:**

Mrs. Pay reported that she is currently investigating a slight leak on the roof.

Ms. Pay also confirmed the date of the Christmas Bazaar which will be held on December 7th for breakfast and festivities.

**10] CORRESPONDENCE:**

The clerk drew attention to the recent circulations;

An invitation from Age UK Oxfordshire to attend their AGM at Oxford Town Hall. [14 Oct]

**11] PLANNING MATTERS:**

Two parishioners attended the meeting to inform the parish council that planning notices had been put up earlier in the day at Bullmarsh Close regarding the application for three extra bungalows in the close. Although members were aware that a planning application was ‘imminent’ from the September meeting, they were unaware that the planning notice had gone up that afternoon. The clerk reported that he had not received anything from Cherwell District Council since Fiona Brown had notified the council of her departure in early October and that Frances Evans would be supervising the application.

Members repeated their concerns over parking in the close. The parishioners voiced their concerns over the existing infrastructure in Middleton Stoney, especially the limited amenities in the village and the problems of public transport.

 ACTION – The clerk would investigate the planning application with Frances Evans at CDC.

**12] OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL:**

The clerk highlighted the following briefings from OCC:

**‘Brexit messages to residents’** which also included notification of Cllr. Corkin’s appointment as the lead member for Brexit at the county council. [11 October].

**Youth Opportunity Fund**, a new promotion to increase opportunities for young people. [9 Oct].

**‘Connecting Oxford’**, OCC’s Cabinet Member for the Environment, Cllr Yvonne Constance’s circulation to tackle congestion on routes into and around Oxford. [25 September].

**13] CHERWELL DISTRICT COUNCIL:**

The clerk signposted the following Cherwell District Council notifications:

* **County Briefing** – distributed by Cllr. Corkin. - The key points of the integration of health and social systems; 1mn fund to provide youth services; preparing for Brexit; mineral and waste sites approval. [28 October]
* **Community Newsletter** – distributed by Cllr. Corkin [17 October] reporting on this year’s Electric Blanket Testing event in Banbury and notification of the Cherwell Senior Forum at Banbury on November 28th.
* **Events for Older people in Banbury and Bicester,** distributed by Laura Thomas at Community Services **[**3 Oct]
* Notification by Fiona Brown, Strategic Housing Officer at Cherwell District Council that she is ‘moving on’ from her position to join a community-led hub elsewhere. [8 Oct].

**14] TRAFFIC:**

Members discussed this agenda item under Matters Arising.

**15] ANY OTHER BUSINESS:**

Professor Lee informed the council that he has spoken to Mr. Fulljames regarding the laying of the wreath on Remembrance Day. Mr. Fulljames has agreed to do so.

Mr, Fulljames was also approved by members to remain the parish council’s representative on the Jersey Educational Trust.

Professor Lee asked members for any ideas/suggestions to improve the functioning of the parish council. Mr. Rees reiterated his desire that the parish council to be effective in their communication with residents. Ms. Pay suggested that there should be more meetings or informal sub groups to deal with the volume of current council business.

**15] NEXT MEETING:**

The next parish council meeting is planned for 6th January 2020 at 7.30pm at the village hall.