**MIDDLETON STONEY PARISH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL ON MONDAY 9TH MARCH 2020 AT 7.30 PM.**

**PRESENT:**

Prof. Lee Chair

Mrs. D. Pay Vice-Chair

Mr. Rees

Mr. A. Grenfell

Mr. Champion

M. Keighery Clerk

**1] APOLOGIES:**

There were apologies from both Mr. Fulljames and Ms. Makari.

**2] DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS:**

There were no interests declared.

**3] MINUTES:**

The minutes of the meeting of 6th January 2020 were approved.

**4] MATTERS ARISING:**

* **Traffic & Environmental Plan:**

Professor Lee issued the updated proposal and consultation document to the parish council. In particular, he flagged the inclusion of three extracts used in the officer report that led the CDC’s planning committee to reject the Great Wolf development application and to highlight the traffic problems in Middleton Stoney. He then asked for members’ opinions, as he hoped that the document could soon be sent to residents to ascertain their expectations.

Mr. Rees expressed his support of the document which he felt should be the basis for the council in its dealings with The Dorchester Group and OCC to see what can be constructed. He was aware that The Dorchester Group have some money and are interested in some of the measures to mitigate traffic in the village. He highlighted, especially, the entrances to the village, signage and speed signs. He also stressed that the document will enable the parish council to ask its parishioners what options they prefer.

Mr. Grenfell insisted that the council should aim high in its dealings with these authorities and so hope for a HGV ban and the speed activation signs.

Professor Lee summarised the discussion and then proposed sending the draft to Councillor Corkin and suggest a meeting as well. Then, after the Great Wolf planning decision, circulate to parishioners.

* **Planning Application at Bullmarsh Close:**

Mrs. Pay represented the parish council at a meeting regarding Bullmarsh Close which met with CDC officials, including Frances Evans. Mrs Pay reported that most nearby residents attended the meeting and heard that it was hoped that construction would start in late April/early May and that it would take approximately ten months to complete the bungalows. Attendees were also told that the construction management is currently being tendered. There is a desire to preserve as many trees as possible in the close and there is also an ‘archaeological dig’ prior to construction starting. During the construction period, there will also be a temporary electricity supply for construction workers rather than a generator.

* **Spring Clean 2020:**

The clerk reported that he had received notification from CDC that the Spring Clean 2020 was planned between 20 March and 14 April. Members instructed the clerk to order the materials as of last year and notify CDC of a preferred date.

* **Village Defibrillator:**

Mr. Grenfell reported that the defibrillator is now fixed at the village hall and it has now been registered with South Central Ambulance Service [SCAS]. Simon Petite will be the primary contact for the defibrillator, Mr. Grenfell the deputy for the device. A training video for volunteers will also become available. He also asked the parish council to publicly thank Leigh Vickers for installing the defibrillator at the village hall.

**5] FINANCE:**

The clerk sent up-to-date accounts to members in the Finance Report. [8th March].

Since the last meeting in January, the General Fund has incurred expenditure for the defibrillator of £1588.80 [offset by the cricket club contribution of £662] and the village hall contribution from post office rent [£12]. Furthermore, the transfers to the VHMF [£1500] and the Playground Account [£500] have been made. Such transfers are the only transactions in these two accounts.

The General Fund has also paid for village hall expenditure of £374.88[emergency lighting replacements] so VAT can be reclaimed back and so will be reimbursed in full for this payment.

Mr Rees referred to his previous circulation of a budget to members with a proposed income and expenditure statement for the current year. He noted the parish council’s desire for a balanced budget, but requested that at each meeting, actual expenditure and income to date should be reported. Furthermore, he asked the council what level of the current council’s 12k reserves could be used for the ‘traffic plan’.

Mr. Champion responded by claiming that he would be reluctant to reduce reserves significantly as the village hall, especially, could incur a significant expenditure and that would create a big bill to ask parishioners for in the Precept.

The clerk confirmed that nearly £5400 was spent on the village hall over the last three years with significant, exceptional expenditure on both the chimney and painting.

Mr. Champion continued by suggesting that it was more realistic to use the sub-station reserves of £2773.

Mr. Rees agreed that the village hall reserves should not be touched, but the sub-station reserves could be used with the General Fund to provide a total figure of £5000 or so on traffic measures, if needed, although the preference is to use OCC/Dorchester/other funds first.

There was a general agreement of this suggestion and so Professor Lee confirmed this by insisting that the parish council use its reserves to invest in traffic management and calming. He was conscious that villagers pay the Precept each year and over decades with sometimes little to show for it.

**6] VE DAY, MAY 2020**

Prof. Lee informed members that he met with the Church Restoration Fund last week to decide on an ‘appropriate offering’ for VE Day in the village. The rationale agreed was not to clash with the national programme of events planned. So it has been decided that the church bells would ring on Friday 8th May at 7pm. Then the Davenports would lead a walk starting at Middleton Park and finishing at the cricket club. Then, on Saturday, Alex Silverman would sing at the church and on the Sunday a specific church service will be carried out. The village hall would be also be hosting a programme of events with a charge of £15 per head.

**7] EXTERNAL MEETINGS:**

Mr. Fulljames and Mr. Rees attended the Viridor/Ardley ERF Liaison meeting held at Ardley on January 24th and chaired by Councillor Corkin.

There is an invite for the forthcoming meeting:

Local Environment Group’s Conference at Benson Village Hall [March 28].

**8] PLAYGROUND:**

There were no updates regarding the playground.

**9] VILLAGE HALL:**

Mrs. Pay informed members that she was seeking to organise a general tidy up of the hall with also some cosmetic painting and to rectify the damp patches apparent inside the building too. Further, she is still working on getting the kitchen floor repaired.

**10] PLANNING MATTERS:**

Mr. Rees highlighted the recent OCC Waste & Minerals Consultation which proposes two sites - one at Ardley -for the building of a plastics recycling plant. Mr. Rees was adamant that the Ardley proposal was totally inappropriate as it is proposes the building of an industrial plant on a greenfield site and will cause further the traffic problems in the village identified during the Great Wolf planning application. Furthermore when the incinerator was built, residents were promised it would be a ‘one-off’ and this has become therefore a matter of trust. Hence Mr. Rees called on the parish council, as a matter of urgency, to respond to the consultation and reject the proposal.

***The Clerk reported that the parish council had responded to the following planning applications***:

19/02550/F - Great Wolf Development – Chesterton **Objected**

MW.0130/19 – Viridor Waste Management – Ardley Fields **Objected**

**11] CORRESPONDENCE:**

The clerk drew attention to the recent circulations:

**Rural Bulletins [28/1/20**], including increased council tax in rural areas; psychological impact of farm crime; Visa launches scheme to enhance cash access in rural areas.

**Rural Bulletin [25/2/20**], including Airbnb harming rural areas, BBC needs to be properly challenged over digital rural services; Land banking of 1mn planned homes yet to be built.

**12] OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL:**

The clerk highlighted the following briefings from OCC:

**December OCC Briefing** – distributed by Cllr. Corkin - key points being: acknowledgement that services for children with special needs are improving; powers to reduce cyber-threats; community groups to tackle climate change; Oxfordshire named top county for recycling. [7 January].

**‘OCC Budget Consultation’** from Cllr. Corkin - notification of consultation published on website, in libraries and other public buildings [9 January].

**January OCC Briefing** – distributed by Cllr. Corkin - key points being: county council invests in new roads, schools and social services; on-line waste information tool; winter booklet providing advice for older people. [31 Jan].

**Brexit Briefing** from Cllr. Corkin - information on Brexit planning and presented to Oxfordshire County Council. [6 Feb].

**Community Transport Newsletter** from John Charlton, including information on the Rural Lynx provided by Cherwell Valley Coaches. [13 Feb].

**February OCC Briefing** – distributed by Cllr. Corkin - key points being: Airband starts work on ultrafast broadband in county; new way to repair and recycle electrical items; becoming a dementia friendly county. [1 March].

**13] CHERWELL DISTRICT COUNCIL:**

The clerk signposted the following Cherwell District Council notifications:

* **Resilient Communities Fund** distributed by Cllr. Corkin - information regarding funding opportunities to protect the welfare of vulnerable community members and also enhance community facilities. [23 January].
* **Precep**t – acceptance of Middleton Stoney Precept for 2020/21 from Ian Robinson, Finance Business Partner at Cherwell District Council [22 Jan].

**14] TRAFFIC:**

Members felt that they discussed this agenda item previously in the traffic plan discussion.

**15] ANY OTHER BUSINESS:**

The clerk asked whether the proposed dates of parish council meetings until April 2021 were acceptable to members. Mrs. Pay suggested that the next parish council meeting take place immediately after the Annual Parish Meeting on May 18th.

**15] NEXT MEETING:**

The next parish council meeting is planned for 18th May 2020 at 7.00pm at the village hall.