

# MIDDLETON & SMERRILL ANNUAL PARISH MEETING Held on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Attendance: Councillor David Mallaband (Chair)

Other Electors of the Parish: Helen Brocklehurst, Helen Burtonshaw, Dianne Jeremy, Paul Jeremy, Pat Musgrave, and Jamie Wigley

Non-electors: Matthew Lovell (Parish Clerk), Andrew McCloy (PDNPA Member)

## 1. Appointment of Clerk to the Meeting.

The meeting appointed the Parish Clerk to take the minutes.

## 2. Apologies – Simon Spencer (County Cllr), Graham Elliott (District Cllr), and PCSO Morris

## 3. To confirm the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2020

The minutes were confirmed and signed

## 4. Chairman's Report

The last 12 months have been more than difficult for all of us.

However, during this time, the Parish Council have held 5 meetings, some of which were via Zoom which in itself presented additional difficulties with poor broadband connections. A factor that should be highlighted that poor broadband in rural areas does have an effect on how we conduct our lives in this day and age.

We are all aware of the effect that covid-19 has had and is having on us all and hopefully we can look to a brighter future.

With virtually no activities taking place within the Parish for almost 12 months and into the immediate future, we can but look forward to some taking place later this year and beyond.

One such event is the 200th anniversary of the birth of Thomas Bateman on the 8th November whereby the Parish Council have commenced work to make the tomb access safer and more presentable for visitors including installing a new boundary fence.

We are now working in conjunction with the Village Hall Committee and PDNPA to plan a series of events commencing in November and into 2022 to celebrate this event.

In addition, and given the current forecasts regarding the pandemic, there is every chance that other activities will also happen, and I am pleased to say that as ever our Village Hall Committee are well placed and working hard to make them happen.

There have been numerous planning requests whereby your Parish Council have given due consideration and have supported those where the interests of the Parish, its inhabitants and the requirements of the applicants have been met. We have on occasions asked for the Peak Park Planning Committee to review their actions rather than a delegated decision being made which led to success on one and a disappointment on another whereby as a result of an administration error we did not make representation at one of the meetings. It is acknowledged that the planning authority are listening more to local residents, but I believe that more can still be done.

For some time now there has been a review of Parish and Ward boundaries. We are currently part of Lathkill & Bradford Ward, which includes Youlgreave, Monyash and Harthill which we believe sits well with our parish. Our views were expressed to this extent last September and a revised proposal has just been received which now proposes that we become part of a new ward, Bonsal & Winster. This will receive further thought and discussion and if anyone wants an input then please look at the details on the Local Government Boundary Commission website or on our Middleton by Youlgreave website and the Bugle. Any comments then please let the Parish Clerk know.

We are still progressing various alternatives with regard to establishing a permanent village hall occupation as opposed to the uncertain occupancy that we have at the moment. The three options previously highlighted are still being pursued and it is hopeful that a clear route can be decided upon in the non-too distant future.

A Climate Change subcommittee has been formed that will involve additional members of the parish to look at ways that we can enhance our local environment and they are already proposing actions to that effect. Any members of the parish are invited to join this initiative by contacting the parish clerk.

On other matters, we have continued to chase for road repairs throughout the parish and street cleaning within the village with reasonable success and maintained grit bins on all three approach roads into the village and maintenance of the parish assets continues. Our website has been updated to meet new legislation and again welcome any comments or views on its format and content. A request has been made to the Haddon River Keeper following the visit last year and we will continue our dialogue with him.

The Parish funds have been slightly reduced following necessary expenditure on Batemans Tomb in preparation for the celebrations mentioned earlier, however, we are pleased to announce that the decision has been made to maintain the precept at the current level for another year.

As always, my personal thanks to fellow councillors, our clerk, the village hall committee and all those involved in various ways to make our parish a pleasant place to live.

With the rollout of the vaccine program the future looks promising and hopefully we can get back to some sort of normality.

David Mallaband  
Chairman

5. District Councillor – Graham Elliott sent his apologies
6. PDNPA Member Andrew McCloy – We are the oldest National Park with our 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary next month but all is scaled back under Covid so celebrations will be virtual. The last ten years has seen a 40% cutback in government finances and redundancies and doing away with a tier of management to protect front line services will be implemented this month, a longer response time will be an expected result in advice and planning as a consequence. Pressures are expected this summer due to tourism again. The Local Plan review is being undertaken – these policy reviews affect the future decisions and Parish input is needed. As our member he is happy to be contacted on any issues. It was noted by those present that the reviews need to include more plain-speaking summaries to assist comment as officer jargon makes them difficult to read.
7. County Councillor Simon Spencer – sent his apologies.

8. Police – PCSO Boswell sent apologies.
9. To consider any other Parish matter that may be brought forward by the Council or local government electors.

State of Green Lane was raised. The discussions noted:

The water reservoir pipeline has never been properly resurfaced after installation by Severn Trent. When asked to fill potholes DCC has only carried out temporary repairs with no long term solution. Its status is that of “Unclassified Highway” so is only in DCC budget with no national assistance so this type of road comes last.

Emphasis on cycle use and daily Severn Trent traffic to the reservoir. Up to Mere Farm Drive needs main repairs. With the influx of additional tourism this summer it was agreed to write to our County Councillor who is also cabinet member for Highways. Whitfield, Lowfield, Roads to Elton and Gratton Moor were raised as examples of Classified Highways needing long term repairs in this area.

No other matters were raised.

The meeting ended at 20:45