

# MIDDLETON TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURE FORUM

Wednesday 11 July 2018  
Middleton Library, Long Street, Middleton M24 1AF

## MINUTES

Please note that if you have not signed the 'signing in' sheet, your presence at the meeting will not be noted.

### Present

Councillor Sue Smith	Middleton Township Vice Chair (Chair of meeting)
Councillor Kallum Nolan	Rochdale Borough Council (RBC)
Councillor Patricia Dale	RBC
Lauren Mason	Township Officer, RBC and minutes
Victoria Davies	Middleton Town Centre Management Company
David Lappin	Resident
Keeley O'Mara	Friends of Hopwood Woods
Lee O'Mara	Friends of Hopwood Woods
Simon Bennett	Friends of Jubilee Park
Sharron Stevens	Friends of Jubilee Park
Howard Bowden	Friends of Jubilee Park
Michael White	Resident

### Apologies

Councillor Donna Williams	Middleton Township Chair
Councillor Sara Rowbotham	RBC
Councillor Phil Burke	RBC
Councillor Malcolm Boriss	RBC
Councillor June West	RBC
Councillor Donna Martin	RBC
Councillor Carol Wardle	RBC
Councillor Neil Emmott	RBC
Councillor Susan Emmott	RBC
Councillor Peter Joinson	RBC
Councillor Peter Williams	RBC
Councillor Linda Robinson	RBC
Steven Lett	Public Realm Inspector – RBC
Stephen Pyke	Public Realm Inspector – RBC
Nick O'Neill	Environmental Management
Gerard Proudman	Environmental Management
Andrew Entwistle	Link4Life
Jerry Stokes	Friends of Alkrington Woods
David Lees	Middleton Civic Association
Gary Leigh	Absolute Angling
Eric Larmett	Friends of Bowlee
Ted Wooley	Friends of Bowlee
Sue Oakley	Conservation Officer - RBC
Christine Grime	Friends of Middleton View and Green Volunteer
Geoff Grime	Friends of Middleton View and Green Volunteer

## **1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

All were welcomed to the meeting by the Chair of the meeting, Councillor Sue Smith, who advised that she was covering this meeting on behalf of Councillor Donna Williams. Introductions were announced. It was requested that mobile phones were switched off and put on to silent. Lauren gave a reminder for everyone to ensure they had signed in.

## **2. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were noted as above.

## **3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING**

### **Any Other Business – No Entry Signage**

David Lappin stated that the minutes are incorrect, and the 'No Entry' signage he was talking about was the area outside Aldi, not outside NatWest, and advised that since he moved to the bungalows at this area he has seen so many vehicles ignoring the 'No Entry' signage. Lauren advised that as this is a 'moving traffic offence' it has to be dealt with by GMP colleagues and she would email them to ask them to look into this matter. **(Action: Lauren to liaise with GMP colleagues and request that another 'Day of Action' was undertaken in the area)**

### **8J – Friends of Mellalieu Street 'Residents Parking Scheme Update'**

Sharron Stevens queried progress on the Mellalieu Street 'Resident's Only Parking Scheme'.

Lauren advised that she would ask colleagues in Highways to contact Sharron with an update.

**(Action: Lauren to request colleagues in Highways to provide an update to Sharron Stevens)**

## **4. STREET CLEANING, WASTE, CLEAN AND GREEN**

Lauren advised that Nick O'Neill hadn't been able to make the meeting, and as such he has provided a written update.

### **Waste**

- After a recent recruitment drive, the service now have fully staffed crews apart from holidays and sickness, so the use of agency staff has reduced from approx. 35-40 per day to 6-10, with the majority of staff being from within the borough.
- The service has invested heavily in new vehicles which are more fuel efficient with less emissions and a greater carrying capacity.

### **Street Cleansing**

- A new dedicated Supervisor, Peter McCallion, is in post and the service has also recruited to vacant positions in this area. Peter is looking at mapping the area for schedules of cleansing to be implemented.

### **Grounds Maintenance**

- Middleton in Bloom judging is on 24 July 2018 so there is a big push on this work as we get nearer the date. The recent dry spell has hampered efforts in watering but they are trying to get an additional bowser in to assist the present two. As the date gets nearer, they will be flooding the route with resources from Street Cleansing, Grounds, Clean and Green and the Hit Teams.
- In the months March, April, March and June, the Clean and Green Team carried out 216 jobs.

### **Hit Teams**

- The Hit Teams attended 3,368 jobs across the borough in 12 months collecting 685 tonnes of waste, 657 tonnes from Council land and 28 tonnes from private land. The cost of this provision including vehicles, staff and tipping charges is £450k per year (not including enforcement officers' costs).

Sharron Stevens advised that the bins on Springfield Road and in Jubilee Park are still not being emptied on a regular basis, and in the current hot weather conditions they are becoming increasingly smelly. **(Action: Lauren to contact Nick O'Neill and Gerard Proudman and request that bins are emptied on a more regular basis)**

Mike White advised that he would like to thank the 'Street Cleaning Team' for the brilliant job they do, but felt that improvements could be made with the waste collections team who often, after emptying wheelie bins, just dumped them and don't return them to where they were collected from. **(Action: Lauren to feed this back to Paul Bowerman who is Waste Manager)**

Howard Bowden stated he felt grateful that Rochdale Borough Council does not charge for waste bins, as is done in some Local Authorities. A discussion took place about previous pilots in other Local Authorities to charge a set amount per waste bin when the bins are collected and weighed. Councillors confirmed that this is not something that Rochdale Borough Council has ever done nor is this being considered.

Concerns were raised about the amount of cigarette ends and glasses (plastic and glass) dumped outside the Roebuck Pub, and following a discussion it was agreed that this problem would be raised with the Public Realm Inspectors with a request for them to visit the location. It would also be fed back through the 'Pub Watch Scheme' ran by GMP PC Tracey Lowe. **(Action: Lauren to liaise with Public Realm Inspectors and PC Tracey Lowe)**

## **5. LINK4LIFE UPDATE**

Unfortunately, Andrew Entwistle was unable to attend the meeting and due to staffing had no representative available to attend on his behalf. He sent a written update, which was read out by Lauren:

- Andy King, Chief Executive of Link4Life, is meeting with Councillors over the coming months to present the update on Link4life and future plans at Middleton.
- Link4life are working on the Events building and a dedicated Events Team that will oversee the programme and improve services.
- Summer Holiday Programme is out and Link4life are running a two week summer holiday camp.
- A number of improvements have been completed over last few months on long standing and essential building works. Roof domes have been repaired to prevent leaks, drains in all changing rooms have been upgraded. Boilers and the hot water system is currently being upgraded due to be completed at the end of the month. This work was undertaken in partnership with Rochdale Borough Council and investment will be around £500k when all completed.

## **6. PUBLIC REALM OFFICERS**

A discussion took place concerning the issue raised at the last meeting about a person known to Officers feeding the pigeons. Victoria advised that she has contacted the Public Realm Inspectors regarding this matter and other issues but hasn't managed to arrange a meeting with them. It was agreed that the email sent by Victoria will be passed to Lauren to raise with Stephen Pyke. **(Action: Victoria to send a copy of the email trail to Lauren and she will raise the concerns with Stephen Pyke and arrange a meeting/site visit)**

## **7. TRANSPORT ISSUES**

Mike White reported that there are some local direction signs on Manchester New Road opposite the petrol station which have become covered by overgrown trees/branches. It was agreed that Lauren would raise this issue with colleagues in Environmental Management. **(Action: Lauren to liaise with colleagues in Environmental Management to request that the branches are trimmed)**

## **8. UPDATES**

### **Middleton Town Centre Management Company**

Victoria advised that she and Adam take monthly walk-arounds of the Town Centre and report any issues such as graffiti or cleaning to the relevant departments. During a recent visit Gerard Proudman (new Streetscenes Operations Manager) met with Victoria and agreed that the benches within the Town Centre required cleaning and varnishing.

Victoria explained that part of her role is to remove any illegal signage/banners, etc. from the Town Centre. The issue was discussed and Victoria requested that an email be sent to the Public Realm Inspectors to arrange a meeting. **(Action: Lauren to liaise with Public Realm Inspectors' Team Manager and request a meeting)**

Councillor Nolan queried if the market canopies/covers could be cleaned, as they are looking very dirty. Victoria advised that new canopies have been ordered and these will be much easier to clean than the older style canopies. An image of the new covers was passed around to attendees at the meeting.

#### **Friends of Middleton View**

No representative present to provide an update.

#### **Friends of Jubilee Park**

Sharron explained that the group feel that there is a lack of support from Rochdale Borough Council:

- Broken promises from colleagues in Environmental Management, such as when the old plants were stolen it has taken over 12 months to get new plants ordered and they still haven't been put in.
- The new pathway that was installed is still not finished. There were also concerns raised about this due to the lack of consultation with the Friends of group from Environmental Management Officers.
- The shrubbery from the sides of the Exedra was removed earlier this year, and despite requests this has still not been replaced. Howard advised that when it rains the earth around the structure is just running off and as such in the long term this could affect the stability of the Exedra.
- Volunteers from the Friends of Group feel they are not supported by Environmental Management Officers with excuses being given continuously whenever work is requested.

Following the above conversation it was agreed that Councillor Nolan will arrange to meet with the Friends of Group to support them and liaise with Environmental Management colleagues regarding the requests from the group. **(Action: Councillor Nolan to meet with the Friends of Jubilee Park)**

Sharron advised that the group are looking to arrange a Christmas Market at St. Leonards Square and Rochdale Ladies Choir have already said they are happy to attend. Councillor Nolan again offered to support the group.

#### **Friends of Wince Brook**

No representative present to provide an update.

#### **Green Volunteers**

No representative present to provide an update.

#### **Friends of Alkrington Woods**

No representative present to provide an update.

#### **Friends of Boarshaw Cemetery**

No representative present to provide an update.

#### **Friends of Hopwood Woods Nature Reserve**

Keeley O'Mara advised that the 'Forest School' has been delayed due to issues with the contractor, but is hopeful works will start very soon.

A new pathway has now been installed near to Oaken Bank Woods; Councillor Nolan thanked the group for all their hard work.

### **Absolute Angling**

No representative present to provide an update.

### **Friends of Bowlee Community Park**

The group had sent apologies to the meeting and provided a written update, which was read out by Lauren:

- From discussions with members, I believe the Altus proposed school bid has been made to the DfE, and we are awaiting the outcome. We are not aware when this might be!
- Our group has been working with Councillor Sue Smith and other groups interested in Bowlee to consider a vision for Bowlee. This is a bottom up approach with consultation across a wide a spectrum as possible! Early days but we will share when early thoughts become clearer.
- On the poppy seeding we are now seeing a good number of flowers where people have left them alone. Unfortunately, the car boot has meant many of the early seedlings were flattened by cars riding on the edgings. Lesson for the future.
- The wild flowers failed to germinate.
- The fruit trees are all growing.
- Our spring tree planting has been a big success with very few failures.
- The car boot appears to be going strong. One of the big challenges is the clean up after. This needs not only the road sweeper but hand picking where litter has blown, or often dumped in the grass and bushes.
- We had a spring litter pick aided by the Green Volunteers and Mike Cummings (thank them all). Mike took away a huge amount of rubbish.

Councillor Smith advised that due to the unprecedented hot weather conditions the pond has dried up. Luckily the community worked together and removed all wildlife to other areas/private ponds, etc. in order to stop it dying.

### **Friends of Mellalieu Street**

Sharron raised concerns about the works being carried out at the Rectory on Mellalieu Street and requested that contact be made on behalf of the group with colleagues in Planning. **(Action: Details to be passed to Lauren who will liaise with Planning Enforcement)**

As discussed in Matter Arising, Sharron Stevens queried progress on the Mellalieu Street 'Resident's Only Parking Scheme'. Lauren advised that she would ask colleagues in Highways to contact Sharron with an update. **(Action: Lauren to request colleagues in Highways to provide an update to Sharron Stevens)**

The group raised concerns about the speed of vehicles travelling on Mellalieu Street, as previously discussed, and Lauren advised that she has chased up Highways regarding the commissioning form and a scheme will be submitted to the next Middleton Township Devolved Funding and Devolved Services Sub Committee meeting on Wednesday 24 October 2018.

### **Status4All**

Councillor Smith advised that the judging for 'It's your Neighbourhood' takes place on Tuesday 24 July 2018, and wished all the entrants good luck.

Councillor Smith will update on other projects at the next meeting.

### **Middleton Cricket Club**

No representative present to provide an update.

### **Middleton Lads and Girls Football Club**

Councillor West had submitted a written up date which advised that work is ongoing. She advised that a meeting took place with Anthony Fletcher, Gerard Proudman and herself and discussions are ongoing regarding the funding needed to assist with drainage and a request will be made to Township as soon as possible.

## **Middleton Civic Association**

No representative present to provide an update.

## **Middleton in Bloom**

Keeley advised of the following:

- Judging for the Middleton in Bloom route will take place on Tuesday 24 July 2018.
- The narrowboat which has been installed at Slattocks has been a great success and a lot of positive feedback has been received.
- Discussions are ongoing about possibly installing some kind of train feature at what was the old Train Station on Townley Street; the group are hopeful this can be carried out in time for next year's In Bloom competition.
- Discussion are also taking place about installing some kind of horse and cart feature in Middleton Gardens; they are working with Ian Trickett and Middleton Town Centre Management on this project.
- Work is taking place on a flowerbed on Mellalieu Street.
- The cabin at Rhodes Lodges used by the angling group has been painted and looks fantastic.
- The flowerbeds near Barclays Bank have been planted up and similar is due to happen in advance of the judging, in some of the Town Centre flowerbeds.
- The group is hoping to include Jubilee Park on the route for judging next year.
- The pubs in Middleton have been asked to help the 'In Bloom' team by installing hanging baskets. Some of the pubs have installed hanging baskets and others haven't been able to or haven't been willing to fund the hanging baskets. This initiative will worked on further for next year.
- Mike White asked that his praise be noted concerning the 'roundabouts' as these are looking fantastic.

## **9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (NOT ALREADY DISCUSSED ON THE AGENDA)**

- David Lappin advised that there is a leak at the sunken roundabout outside the Asheton Arms which has been ongoing for many months. He stated that he has reported this previously, and Lauren confirmed that she has also previously reported this issue and agreed that she would again make contact with United Utilities to chase up the repair.
- David Lappin advised that as previously discussed coaches are still parking in the 'bus stop' area outside Weatherspoon's on match days. Lauren advised that she did report this to GMP, who visited and asked the landlord of the pub to ask coach drivers to stop parking at this location. **(Action: Lauren to report the issue to PC Tracey Lowe and ask that this be raised as a concern via the Pub Watch Scheme)**

## **10. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

31 October 2018

23 January 2019

20 March 2019