

MIDDLETON CUM FORDLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 12 FEBRUARY 2025 AT 7pm AT THE VILLAGE HALL

"Please note that the Parish Council will be pleased to consider adding additional items suggested by residents to future agendas. If you would like to make such a request or contact the Parish Council on any other matter, please do so via the Parish Clerk on parishclerkmiddleton@gmail.com".

1 Attendance and Apologies

Attendees:

Cllr Julian Cusack
Cllr Charles Macdowell
Cllr Giles Piercy
Cllr Michele Kendall
Cllr Steve Thorpe
Cllr Lesley Taylor
Cllr Kathryn Rowe
Cllr Chris Reynolds

Apologies:

Cllr Graham Lacey

In attendance:

District Councillor Sarah Whitelock
Cllr Charlotte Fox (Benhall & Sternfield)
Rachael Salcombe – Parish Clerk
Members of the public x 3

2 Councillors' Declarations of Interest. None.

3 Public Forum.

District Cllr Whitelock (7.45pm). The PC were advised that consistent refusal of planning applications by the District Council may result in the right to pass comment being removed. Parish and town councils are not to cite the use of gas fired central heating as a reason for not approving a new residential development site. Furthermore, it is illegal to do so. To address this issue a document has been produced for housing developers called The Best Practice Guide for Housing Development to encourage them to consider some of the options that are now available in terms of heating, insulation and build quality.

The meeting was reminded again of the 50% discount on loft insulation currently being offered by ESC (see website).

Ed Miliband MP was invited to attend a meeting to discuss the proximity of the energy projects and the impact on the area. A response was eventually received stating that he was unable to visit at this time, however, within a week of the correspondence, Ed Miliband was in Lowestoft.

Coastal Partnership East manages the coastlines between Norfolk and Suffolk. ESC has pulled out of their arrangement with this organisation as it was felt that more money was going in and less results coming out. ESC now has their own coastal management team.

On the matter of Devolution, County Council elections have been cancelled for a year and Mayor elections will take place in 2026.

4 Minutes

- a) The Council approved the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 8 January 2025,
- b) Matters arising and Action Points
 - Cllr Cusack to arrange for cutting of the hedge at the burial ground c/f

- Hastoe Field Meeting invites have been issued to local parish/town councils, district councillors and SZC Community Fund staff.
- An invitation to the Hastoe Field meeting has been supplied for the village newsletter, along with the request for a blanket email to residents.
- The hall has been cancelled for 28 January and re-booked for Wednesday 26 February.
- Cllr Macdowell reported back that SZC were unable to provide an end date for the use of Littlemoor Road by construction traffic.
- Cllr Macdowell has requested, via email, that MPC be added to the register of interested parties in preparation for the Sealink DCO process.
- MPC are now affiliated with East Suffolk Planning Alliance.

5 Causeway Farm/Hastoe Field

The format for the evening will be like last years; Cllr Piercy will act as host; Cllr Cusack will provide an introduction, and Cllr Thorpe will present the plans for the field. Following this people will be invited into small groups to answer questions that will be provided. The answers will then be shared and, finally, people will be invited to complete a survey to establish interest and seek volunteers to form a steering group.

It was agreed that clarity is needed (before 26 February) to establish the end date of the existing tenancy at Causeway Farm. **Action: Cllr Piercy to pursue.**

SZC Community Fund have made contact to advise that the Environmental Impact Fund is now open for applications. The newly appointed steering group will arrange a meeting with SZC to take this application forward. It is anticipated that the PC may apply to both the Community Fund and the Environmental Impact Fund.

It was agreed that the meeting must highlight the extensive criteria that needs to be met to be considered for a grant.

6 Sizewell C and other Energy Projects

MPC thanked Cllr Charlotte Fox (Benhall and Sternfield) who kindly attended the meeting and presented a thorough overview of the proposed energy projects in the area, their impact and ways forward. It is anticipated that this message will be delivered to local parish councils affected by the energy projects.

A member of the public questioned, in terms of distance, why Lionlink is starting in Walberswick, and finishing in Saxmundham. The meeting was advised that each energy project has its own landfall site and cable corridor. It is understood that the projects cannot all go through one landfall site and one cable corridor, due to geographical and engineering considerations.

There has been no response from the advertisement for village residents to form part of an Emergency Planning Group. It was agreed to address this again at March's meeting and to give it an agenda item of its own. **Action: Cllrs Cusack and Piercy to meet prior, in preparation for March's meeting.**

Cllr Macdowell reported the latest from the SZC project.

- There are several road closures planned for this year between Middleton and Leiston, Middleton and Yoxford and Middleton and Saxmundham. Some will be complete closures and others traffic light-controlled works.
- Cllr Macdowell to attend a walkabout and meeting regarding the SLR on Thursday 20 February.
- The green rail route will be crossing the B1122 by the Lovers Lane turn, with the building of a new level crossing.
- Upon enquiry regarding long diversion routes, it was advised that only one diversion route can be created, and it must be suitable for HGVs (thus ruling out the use of rural roads).
- B1122 night closures are scheduled for late March through to the middle of May.

- The meeting was advised that the foot path proposed along the Moor will not run alongside the road but a few yards into the Moor. The path will be created using gravel so that it may be removed at a later date. However, the meeting agreed that the proposal would not be well received by residents; it is on the wrong side of the road, does not go anywhere and is unsuitable for use by all abilities. (The original plan to move the entire carriageway and create a footpath was rejected on the grounds of cost.) **Action: Cllr Macdowell to ask for deletion from the programme of works.**
- B1122/Mill Street electronic warning sign to be erected April/May 2025.
- There is an Archaeological Open Day weekend on 22 and 23 February, 10am-4pm and 10am-3pm respectively, Waterloo Centre, Leiston. This event is free and open to all.
- Rail closure moved to February 2026. The line will be closed for 9 days with a bus replacement service being offered.
- 21,675 trees have been felled to date. It is understood that trees will be planted along the SLR.
- Cllr Macdowell is unable to make the Community Forum on 27 March at High Lodge, Darsham. Dist. Cllr Whitelock will be attending and offered to take any questions.

7 Councillors Reports

- Village Hall. No report
- Middleton Primary School. No report
- Highways, footpaths and trees. No report
- Middleton Moor. Cllr Taylor reported back on the pond works carried out in January. The water has been 'opened up', although not as much vegetation was removed as hoped. Bullrush is growing amongst water lilies, thus making it difficult to remove. The contractor advised that, ideally, an excavator is needed. This option was pursued last year; however, Natural England, via Suffolk Wildlife Trust, rejected the idea, stating that other means are to be tried first, with excavating a last resort. A member of the public raised concern over possible damage to surrounding areas should an excavator be used and also suggested that SZC funds may be available to aid the restoration of the pond. It was suggested that a report from the contractor is requested, so that it may be presented to Natural England as evidence for the need of an excavator. **Action: Cllr Taylor to make contact with the contractor.** Cllr Taylor was thanked for organising and overseeing the pond works.

8 Finance

- The latest financial position was received and accepted by all.
- Actual vs Budget for Q3 was received and accepted by all.
- The following payment was authorised.

Details	Payee	Amount	Power
G5 Adult Defibrillation Pads	Active Med Supplies Ltd	£84.74	LGA 1972 s.137

- Planning Application.** The Parish Council agreed to support Planning Application DC/25/0106/FUL. Two-storey side extension and single-story rear extension. Address: 4 Rectory Road, Middleton. **Action: Clerk to inform Planning at East Suffolk Council**
- Councillor Resignation.** The meeting was advised that Cllr Lesley Taylor will be stepping down from her role as Councillor and Vice-Chair. Cllr Taylor has served on the Parish Council for 5 years and her commitment and service, including the setting up and running of the drop-in centre and cooked meal deliveries, to the Parish was commended. **Action: Clerk to prepare and submit an advertisement for a councillor in the village newsletter.**
- Village Path approach to Church.** Cllr Lacey is meeting with Dale Johnson on 13 February 2025.

- 12 CIL Spending.** It was agreed to use £225 of CIL funds (expires in April of this year) towards the two new bins at the Recreation Ground. **Action: Clerk to confirm with ESC.**
- 13 Correspondence.**
- i) Cats and Volunteer Community Car Drivers. It was agreed to allow posters to be placed on the village noticeboards and to pass on details for advertising in the village newsletter. **Action: Clerk to contact and advise CATS.**
 - ii) Safety of Lithium-ion Batteries Campaign. The contents of the correspondence were noted.
 - iii) TPO/179/2024 Street Record Rectory Road Middleton. It is understood that the TPO's are already in place and that this latest document replaces the original, that was worded incorrectly. It was agreed to register our support for the application. **Action: Clerk to advise ESC.**
 - iv) Bike Maintenance Stations. It was agreed that The Bell Inn would be a good location. **Action: Clerk to contact The Bell Inn and ESC.**
 - v) Correspondence has also been received from a photographer based in Yoxford, who is seeking a suitable venue in Middleton and advertising options in order to carrying out a project to record the personal impact of the national infrastructure projects on the local communities. **Action: Clerk to advise accordingly.**
- 14 Items for Next Agenda.**
- Emergency Planning Group
 - Pond – English Nature/excavator decision.
- 15 Next Meeting.** The date and time of the next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 12 March 2025 at 7pm, at the Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.