

MIDDLETON CUM FORDLEY PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 11 MARCH 2026 AT 7pm AT THE VILLAGE HALL

"Please note that the Parish Council will be pleased to consider adding additional items suggested by residents please do so via the Parish Clerk on parishclerkmiddleton@gmail.com".

1 Attendance and Apologies

Attendees:

Cllr Steve Thorpe (Chair)
Cllr Charles Macdowell
Cllr Chris Reynolds
Cllr Kathryn Rowe
Cllr Michele Kendall
Cllr Ian Widginton
Cllr Giles Piercy

Apologies accepted for absence:

Cllr Julian Cusack

In attendance:

Parish Clerk
Members of the public x 3

2 Councillors' Declarations of Interest. None.

3 Public Forum. A member of the public, present at this meeting, has written to SZC regarding issues along the B1122 that have been outstanding for several months. The planned next step is to advise SZC that contact will be made with the EADT if they continue to fail to meet their promises.

County Councillor Richard Smith will be retiring in May of this year.

4 Minutes

a) The Council approved the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 11 February 2026.

b) Matters arising and Action Points

- * SCC have been contacted requesting that the rubbish at Causeway Farm be removed.
- * A link was placed in the village newsletter for reporting problems to SCC Highways.
- * The updated Mandate was submitted to HSBC. See below for further information.
- * ESC has been advised of MPC's no objection to planning application DC/26/0353/FUL.

5 Causeway Farm. A care farm outside of Framlingham has expressed interest to SCC to establish a care farm on the site. Upon enquiry by the care farm, it is understood that SCC are planning to sell the farmhouse as a separate dwelling and will be looking for planning permission to build houses on the existing footprint of the barns and are, therefore, not interested in a care farm on this site. However, there may be an option to establish a care farm on another site within the village. SCC have been contacted by MPC voicing disappointment that, despite our meeting with them in January, they continue to leave MPC and village residents 'out of the loop'. As a result, MPC will be meeting with SCC on Monday 16 March 2026 for a thorough update, including plans for Hastoe Field.

Concerns regarding the condition of the site was raised by a member of the public. This will be raised at the meeting on Monday with SCC.

6 Sizewell C and other Energy Projects. The Lionlink consultation process has now finished. MPC have submitted their own input. Cllr Macdowell has written to our MP regarding the lack of coordination between the different energy projects and a case study about how Lionlink is proposing

to a) go through the parish on a brand-new route or b) along the SLR, which MPC believes to be the better option.

Two main local activities regarding SZC are Friday Street and Yoxford roundabouts, both of which are due to be open at the end of the month. In the meantime, both have overnight weekend closures. Pretty Road will now be closed at the end of April, rather than March. B1122 works start after Easter (exact works are unknown and enquiries will be made by MPC).

MPC attended a joint parish council meeting last week to speak with SZC regarding a letter that was written by the parishes detailing concerns of the residents along the B1125. It was confirmed that SZC will not put in speed cameras along the B1125. SCC Highways confirmed that they will not reduce the 50mph speed limit. A speed indicator device would need to be funded by MPC, including installation and maintenance. The clerk has contacted SCC Highways regarding this matter but is yet to receive a reply. **Action: Clerk to chase a response.** In the meantime, the question was raised as to whether MPC could borrow Westleton PC SID. **Action: Cllr Thorpe to enquire.**

MPC are in receipt of an email from village residents regarding tree cutting on their property as part of a new footpath being installed by SZC. It was agreed that the problem needs to be understood in more detail. **Action: Cllr Thorpe to contact SZC for further information. Action: Clerk to advise owners of MPC's intentions.**

7 Emergency Planning Group – c/f

8 Councillors Reports

- a) Village Hall Management Committee. Cllr Kendall will attend the March meeting.
- b) Middleton Primary School. Cllr Kendall had a successful visit with the headteacher.
- c) Highways, footpaths and trees. SZC will be putting in extra footpaths along the B1125 towards the end of the year (although it is understood that they are behind schedule). Questions regarding this will be raised at the next SZC Community Forum. Enquiry was made regarding the spreading of ashes under the Sycamore tree on the Moor and this was approved by the owner.
- d) Middleton Moor Management Group. Works are planned on the two ponds either side of the entrance to Moor House.

9 Finance

- a) The latest financial position was received and accepted by all.
- b) Bank reconciliation for Q3 was noted and accepted by all.
- c) The following payments were authorised.

Details	Payee	Amount	Power
Toner Giant, printer drums, ratify	Parish Clerk	£119.00	LGA 1972 s.111
Overtime for February 7.5 hours	Parish Clerk	£144.90	LGS 1972 s.112

The clerk confirmed that she is now a signatory on the parish account. On the back of this, arrangements will be made for the telephone banking service and a debit card (upon enquiry, a credit card is not offered by HSBC for parish councils). Following verbal agreement from Cllr Cusack, the clerk, as a signatory, will now be able to make herself the primary user. This was also agreed by the councillors at this meeting. As the primary user the clerk will be able to make larger payments in a single transaction. To date payments for the recreation ground purchases are being made piecemeal, which is both clumsy and time consuming. **Action: Clerk to carry out the process to become the primary user on the account.**

10 Administration. The following documents were re-adopted by the PC.

- a) Model Standing Orders
- b) Financial Regulations

- c) Internal Controls – c/f to April. **Action: Clerk to update in line with NALC/SALC guidelines**
 - d) Code of Conduct
 - e) Risk Assessment
 - f) Asset Register – solar panels added
- Action: Clerk to upload re-adopted documents onto village website.**

11 Agree engagement of SALC for 2025/26 audit.

It was agreed to employ SALC to carry out the internal audit, at a cost of £189 exc. VAT.

12 Planning Application. DC/26/0489/FUL. To extend existing annex to create a second bedroom and larger living space. Also to install PV panels on front and south-east roof slopes. Tollgate, Middleton Moor. MPC support this application. **Action: Clerk to advise ESC Planning.**

13 Correspondence.

- It was agreed that Cllrs Macdowell and Thorpe will meet independently to complete the Suffolk Highways Town and Parish Council Survey on behalf of MPC.
- It was agreed to meet on Tuesday 17 March, 7pm, in the village car park to consider Planning Application DC/26/0548/TPO. 1no. Beech – Overall crown reduction by 2 metres and remove 2 stems. **Action: Clerk to produce an Agenda.**
- The clerk advised the meeting, upon enquiry with SALC, that should MPC find themselves without a chairperson, protocol is to elect a chairperson at the beginning of each meeting (to run for one month) whereupon a Declaration of Interest is completed each time. (This document does not need to be shared with ESC but is kept by MPC).
- MPC are in receipt of correspondence from a village resident regarding existing and future works to their property. Clarity regarding the works has been provided and it was agreed at the meeting that the residents (at their suggestion) write a piece for the next village newsletter with an update. **Action: Clerk to supply newsletter contact details.**
- It was agreed to pay SALC for 6 months payroll ending 31 March 2026. **Action: Clerk to make payment.**
- The meeting was advised that the current tenants of The Bell Inn are going into liquidation, and that Adnams are planning to sell the pub. It was agreed to write to Adnams to advise that the pub is listed as an asset of community value. This will give an opportunity for the village, should they so choose, to think about whether we would want to raise money to take ownership of the pub. **Action: Cllr Piercy to compose a suitable letter (to be signed by Cllr Cusack).**

14 Items for Next Agenda.

15 Next Meeting. Agreed for Wednesday 8 April 2026 at 7pm, at the Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 8.15pm.