

## **MIDDLETON CUM FORDLEY PARISH COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 11 DECEMBER 2024 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](mailto:parishclerkmiddleton@gmail.com)".

#### **1 Attendance and Apologies**

##### **Attendees:**

Cllr Julian Cusack  
Cllr Charles Macdowell  
Cllr Giles Piercy  
Cllr Graham Lacey  
Cllr Chris Reynolds  
Cllr Steve Thorpe

##### **Apologies:**

Cllr Lesley Taylor  
Cllr Michele Kendall  
Cllr Kathryn Rowe  
District Councillor Sarah Whitelock

##### **In attendance:**

Rachael Salcombe – Parish Clerk  
Members of the public x 3

#### **2 Councillors' Declarations of Interest. None.**

- 3 Public Forum.** A member of the public advised the meeting that a public meeting has taken place in Yoxford, organised by Yoxford Parish Council and attended by SZC. The meeting covered plans for the roundabout and the SLR; are Middleton Parish Council planning anything similar? Cllr Macdowell advised the meeting of plans to meet with Yoxford, Theberton and Kelsale Parish Councils and SZC to establish progress and convey our frustrations at the lack of information and scale of works taken place to date. However, this would not be a public meeting. It was agreed that a public meeting may be considered in the new year.

The destructive archaeological works were mentioned again. Cllr Cusack reiterated that it was never intended that only archaeological works would take place at this time, but also clearing of the areas (under the guise of archaeological works) ready for construction work in Spring next year. Cllr Macdowell reminded the meeting that the DCO provides for all tree and shrub clearance and planning permission has been granted. The Parish Council does not have any power to stop the destruction and furthermore, it is felt that SZC have misled the public. The construction of semi-permanent compounds, as seen at these sites, are not part of the archaeological works.

#### **4 Minutes**

- a) The Council approved the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 13 November 2024.
- b) Matters arising and Action Points
  - Cllr Cusack to arrange for cutting of the hedge at the burial ground c/f.
  - Cllr Taylor to write an article for the newsletter regarding interest in public transport for the village c/f
  - Go ahead given for pond clearing works.
  - Safeguarding and Equality/Diversity policies can be found on the village website.
  - Contact has been made with a possible grass cutter for the village green. Cllr Piercy to put the contact in touch with the Clerk to make arrangements for the new year. It was agreed to pay £40 for a maximum of 8 cuts.
  - Emergency Workshop invitation has been put on the village noticeboards. Clerk to submit for January newsletter also. Subsequent to the meeting it was established that the invitation is in December's newsletter.
  - Donation of £500 was made to the village newsletter and a thank you has been received.

- 5 Causeway Farm.** Cllr Piercy has researched potential grant options for Hastoe Field and supplied the meeting with information on each. It was agreed to create a subgroup to consider the grants and make appropriate applications.

Cllrs Cusack, Piercy and Thorpe attended a meeting with UK Power Networks regarding the practicalities of introducing solar panels as part of the Hastoe Field development (and, possibly, another field on Causeway Farm). Written costs/estimates are to follow. The proposal is for 85kws, with costs, approximately, at £1,000 per kw, representing a £85,000 investment, with connection costs bringing the total to approximately £100,000. A yield of £12,500 is expected each year, with a payback period of between 8/9 years. The lifetime of solar panels is estimated at 40 years, providing a continuous source of revenue after the payback period. It was noted that there is a risk of the yield fluctuating. It was agreed to share this information/idea at the public meeting to be held in the new year.

A date for the public meeting was agreed for Tuesday 28 January 2025 @ 7pm. **Action: Clerk to confirm date with absent councillors and book the village hall.**

**6 Sizewell C and other Energy Projects**

MPC have received a request from a resident regarding access to an emergency plan following an accident/incident at the nuclear power station. Cllr Macdowell confirmed that, as part of the DCO, there is an Emergency Response Plan. It is understood that the existing plan (created by SCC in 2021) is out of date and currently being revised, with a release expected early next year. This plan specifically covers the release of radioactive material.

The problem was raised of SZC workers, controlling the traffic at Littlemoor Road, parking large vehicles on the moor and causing considerable damage. It was agreed to seek reassurance from SZC that any damage caused will be made good. The floodlighting was also questioned, given that the site is a fully secure compound with zero construction activity taking place at night. Middleton Moor have refused street lighting and safety features to preserve the dark skies but are now suffering unnecessary light pollution.

**Action: Cllr Macdowell to address, at the next forum, i) duration of works and confirmation that any damaged caused will be put right and ii) light pollution.**

As a point of interest, a member of the public advised the meeting that during the construction of Sizewell B works traffic was prohibited through the Moor.

**7 Councillors Reports**

- a) Village Hall. No report
- b) Middleton Primary School. No report
- c) Highways, footpaths and trees. No report
- d) Middleton Moor. Works on the pond are still scheduled to go ahead. (September PC minutes recorded that Cllr Taylor contacted the contractor and reported back that all is on schedule.)

**8 Finance**

- a) The latest financial position was received and accepted by all.
- b) The following payments were authorised.

Details	Payee	Amount	Power
Overtime 12 hours @ £18.26 per hour	Rachael Salcombe	£219.12	LGA 1972 s. 112
A4 copier paper, Marquee Media Ltd	Rachael Salcombe	£25.08	LGA 1972 s. 111

- 9 Report from Finance Working Group – Budget for 2025/26.** The recommendation for approval of the 2025/26 budget and for the precept to be raised to £10,295 (representing a 5% increase) was agreed and accepted by all. **Action: Clerk to submit to ESC.** Cllrs Taylor and Piercy were thanked for their contribution to the Finance Working Group.

- 10 Donation Policy.** A Donation Policy was presented to and approved by the Councillors. **Action:** Clerk to upload the Donation Policy onto the village website.
- 11 Eco Camping Planning Application.** This application follows on from the original Planning Application made in April of this year, which the Parish Council did not support. The revised plans were discussed, following an onsite meeting with the applicant, and it was agreed not to support the modified plans on the following grounds: -

The accommodation proposed comprises permanent buildings and these are not permitted at this site under Policy SCLP6.5 New Tourist Accommodation because i) the site is not within the settlement boundaries, ii) the structures will not be created by the conversion of existing buildings of permanent structure, iii) the site is not a medium or large scale site where commercial, recreational or entertainment facilities are provided and iv) the development does not form part of a comprehensive masterplan which supports wider landscape and ecological gain.

**Action:** Clerk to inform the Planning Department at East Suffolk Council.

- 12 Village Path approach to Church.** A quote from Nice Touch Landscape has not been received. Cllr Reynolds advised the meeting that the original contractor considered for this work is now available again. **Action:** Cllr Reynolds to supply Cllr Lacey with contact details. **Action:** Cllr Lacey to make contact, with a view to meeting on site.
- 13 Funding/Grant Opportunities.** Cllr Taylor successfully applied for the East Suffolk Cost of Living Community Grant in the sum of £2,000. It was anticipated that this money would be used to create the Middleton Community Hub, with the PC collaborating and pooling resources with other groups in the village. The intention was to offer a warm friendly setting, serving hot drinks and light meals, providing magazines, newspapers and board games plus assistance with prescriptions, benefits and hospital transport. Unfortunately the PC have been unable to bring together enough resources to make the plan for a village hub possible. It is hoped that this can be revisited next year. The meeting thanked Cllr Taylor for her time and effort regarding this matter.

**Action:** Clerk to advise East Suffolk Community Partnerships accordingly. Clerk to advise the village groups accordingly.

Public transport for the village c/f

- 14 2025 Meeting Dates.** The meeting dates were agreed. **Action:** Clerk to upload on village website.

It was agreed that the Annual Parish Meeting in May should include updates for the public on Causeway Farm and SZC.

- 15 Correspondence.** No correspondence.

- 16 Items for Next Agenda**

- 17 Next Meeting.** The date and time of the next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 8 January 2024, at 7pm, at the Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 7.50pm.