

## **MIDDLETON CUM FORDLEY PARISH COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 9 April 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](mailto:parishclerkmiddleton@gmail.com)".

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

##### **Attendees:**

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

##### **Apologies:**

Cllr Michele Kendall  
District Councillor Sarah Whitelock

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

Rachael Salcombe – Parish Clerk  
Members of the public x 3

#### **2 Councillors' Declarations of Interest.** Cllr Macdowell declared an interest relating to Planning Applications DC/25/1101 and 1102/FUL.

#### **3 Public Forum.** Discontent was voiced over the pond works recently carried out, although it was acknowledged that the water has been 'opened up' (a condition of the grant) and provided evidence/information on how to proceed next.

Significant damage to the road verges, by SZC traffic, was also reported. **Action: Cllr Macdowell to report this to SZC.**

Cllr Macdowell confirmed, upon enquiry, that the SLR will be open Summer 2027.

#### **4 Minutes**

The Council approved the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 12 March 2025.

\* No dog fouling signs were handed to Cllr Macdowell for erecting.

\* The village green is being cut.

#### **5 Causeway Farm**

An application to the SZC Community Fund has been drafted and shared with Sarah Mortimer (Fund Project Manager), the PC are currently awaiting feedback. It was agreed to submit the application (for either the 20 April deadline or the following 20 July deadline), in order to keep options open, but no decision to proceed will be made until further consultation with residents.

Correspondence voicing concerns regarding the possibility of a Community Park at Hastoe Field has been received from some residents. The issues raised were discussed, with responses as follows:

**No clear mandate.** The meeting was widely publicised, with most attendees in favour of the project. Only a small amount of direct feedback was received via the village newsletter and village website. Twenty three out of the 40 attendees replied positively to the survey handed out at the

end of the meeting. It was agreed that opinion is divided but the PC will continue to progress as planned.

**Alternatives?** We are limited by SZC guidelines and what their Community Fund will approve. The focus must very much be on mitigating the impact of SZC on the community. Although, it was noted that alternatives could be pursued through other grant opportunities.

**Maintenance Costs.** The SZC grant, if approved, will provide three years' worth of payments, therefore it will be beyond these three years that revenue funding will be required. Below is an example of what may be required:

A provisional estimate of £8,530 per annum for the employment of a grounds person one day per week and equipment hire was discussed. This would, it is hoped, be partially offset by other funding but if entirely added to the precept, it would represent approx. 69p per week extra, per Band D (average) household.

It was noted that current maintenance of the pavilion and playing field costs fall partly on the precept.

Action: Cllr Cusack to respond to residents' email.

Action: Cllrs Cusack, Piercy and Thorpe to meet to discuss next steps.

## **6 Sizewell C and other Energy Projects.** Cllr Macdowell reported back on Lion Link.

- Footprint measures 30 metres wide. Cables buried 2 metres down. For the crossing of rivers, streams, roads and railways the cables will be buried 6 metres down.
- It is anticipated that works will be completed in a single season.
- Currently in the consultation phase (ending at the end of this year).
- DCO will be submitted to the Government in October 2026.
- Build will take place 2029/30.
- A haul road will run alongside and within the 30-metre gap, for two years.

A member of the public attended the recent meeting in Saxmundham and advised that Lion Link staff were unable to answer questions put to them.

The meeting was advised that vegetation must not be planted where the cables run.

It was agreed that the PC should be represented at the Lion Link public enquiry.

A bullet point recap of the SZC Community Forum on 27 March was supplied to the Councillors by the Clerk. Questions were raised as to whether 26,000 trees have been planted and if so, where?

Action: Clerk to seek clarity from SZC.

A request was made by a member of the public that MPC arrange a public meeting for Middleton residents with SZC to discuss the multiple areas of devastation, this was agreed by the PC if SZC agree to organise/chair/publicise and fund), although with limited expectation that anything positive will be achieved. Action: Cllr Macdowell to liaise with SZC.

Cllr Lacey has written to SZC regarding yet more destruction of hedgerows along Fordley Road and poorly placed temporary traffic stoppage notices. Prior notice of the works was not provided to residents. Cllr Cusack also contacted SZC regarding this road closure and the inadequate signage. The average time for SZC to reply is 4/5 days. Action: Cllr Macdowell to share Cllr Lacey's email with other SZC contacts.

Cllr Macdowell reported back on the latest Main Development Site Forum.

- Average speed cameras due by the end of June.
- Electronic warning sign on Mill Lane junction with B1122 due by the end of June.
- Between August and October Leiston Station Road level crossing will be closed for 18 days.
- A new grant fund, East Suffolk Trust Fund, will be opening for bids next Spring.
- Via a zoom meeting, a member of staff from Hinkley shared problems that have been experienced including light pollution, an increase of workforce from an original figure of 6,000 to 12,000, with 500 employees a week going through induction. A large percentage of workers are not local. The extra workforce is causing feeding and sewage issues. Traffic is a problem, with fly parking a big issue. Negative impact on local rental market. The change to a unitary authority in Somerset has proved unhelpful with the loss of many Hinkley experts. There is a big nighttime economy with fast food joints that are doing well. They now have their own health and police set up. Spent fuel will be stored on site (60 years' worth).

## 7 Emergency Planning Group – c/f

## 8 Councillors Reports

- Village Hall. No report
- Middleton Primary School. No report. It was agreed that a PC councillor liaise with the school.  
**Action: Cllr Rowe to ask Cllr Kendall.**
- Highways, footpaths and trees. No report, other than SZC destruction.
- Middleton Moor. Cllr Cusack confirmed an outstanding action to write to Natural England seeking permission to use machinery to help clear over-grown vegetation from the pond.

The Rural Payments Agency have made contact requesting the PC's completed application form for the next payment of the Stewardship Grant. Cllr Cusack has made several requests for a claim form, but nothing has been received to date. Deadline is 1 May.

## 9 Finance

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

Details	Payee	Amount	Power
Hire of Village Hall 2024/25	Middleton Village Hall	£260.00	LGA 1972 s.111
Clerk Expenses (travel/working from home)	Rachael Salcombe	£207.15	LGA 1972 s.111
Payroll Services period ending 31.3.25	SALC	£54.00	LGA 1972 s.112
SALC Membership 25/26	SALC	£213.95	LGA 1972 s.111

## 10 Village Green Grass Cutting. See above.

## 11 Village Path approach to Church. It was agreed to accept the quote from Nice Touch Landscapes in the sum of £2,475.00. **Action: Cllr Lacey to i) accept the quote, ii) produce a written contract, iii) administer the work and iv) advise the two neighbours accordingly.**

## 12 Planning Applications.

- DC/25/1303/AND. Non-illuminated Advertisement Consents – advertisements at 11 Sizewell C project construction site access. The PC does not approve the application. The boards are considerably larger than is necessary for deliveries and traffic management at the construction sites. Given the current mood in Middleton and neighbouring villages over the wide scale removal of trees and hedgerows, it will be seen by many as provocative and will invite graffiti. The advertisements as proposed will therefore be contrary to good

community relations between Sizewell C and local communities. We suggest that Sizewell C be invited to reapply with considerably smaller and less intrusive advertising panels.

- ii) DC/25/1101/FUL. Proposed conversion of Agricultural Building at Valley Farm House, Leiston Road, Middleton. The PC approve this application.
- iii) DC/25/1102/LBC. Proposed conversion of Agricultural Building at Valley Farm House, Leiston Road, Middleton. The PC approve this application.

**Action:** Clerk to advise East Suffolk Council, Planning Department accordingly.

- 13 Annual Parish Meeting and Annual Parish Council Meeting (14.5.25).** It was agreed to offer a Q&A session at this year's Annual Parish Meeting. **Action:** i) Clerk to invite annual reports from village groups and ii) prepare an advertisement for the newsletter.
- 14 Gov.uk email address(es).** The PC noted the arguments for gov.uk email address(es) for the parish clerk and councillors, as recommended by the Government, however, it was agreed to carry out more research into cost and necessity.
- 9 Correspondence.** Brave Futures email was shared and discussed. It was decided not to make a donation at this time.
- 10 Items for Next Agenda.** Emergency Planning Group
- 11 Next Meeting.** The date and time of the next meetings (Annual Parish Meeting and Annual Parish Council Meeting) are scheduled for Wednesday 14 May 2025 at 6pm, at the Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.