

MIDDLETON CUM FORDLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY 10th NOVEMBER 2020 AT 6:00 PM VIA ZOOM MEETINGS

1. Attendance and Apologies

Attendees:

Cllr. Nigel Smith - Chair
Cllr. Roy Dowding - Vice-Chair
Cllr. Julian Cusack
Cllr. Lynda Whitbread
Cllr. Colin Whitbread
Cllr. Graham Ingham
Cllr. Lesley Taylor
Cllr. Chris Reynolds
Cllr. Steve Thorpe

Apologies for absence:

None.

In attendance:

Sharon Smith - Clerk/RFO
District Cllr. Terry-Jill Haworth-Culf
District Cllr. Jocelyn Bond
County Cllr. Richard Smith
No members of the public

2. Councillors' Declarations of Interest

None.

3. Public Forum

a) District Cllr. T-J Haworth-Culf thanked Cllr. Julian Cusack for attending the ESC Community Partnership meeting. Cllr. Haworth-Culf summarised the latest COVID-19 statistics for East Suffolk. The Home But Not Alone campaign has been relaunched for the second lockdown and Pink Orange are providing free meal kits to people in need. Cllr. Haworth-Culf spoke about the recent shed burglaries in the area and suggested the Council signs up to the police text messaging service which provides alerts to reported local crimes.

b) District Cllr. Jocelyn Bond asked the Council to let the Ward Members know if they require help with supporting or objecting to planning applications. She is concerned that lately they have not received many requests for support. Cllr. Nigel Smith said that site notices are not being put up and asked whether this is the responsibility of the applicant or the planning officer. He suggested the applicant could put the notices up if the coronavirus pandemic is stretching the District Council's resources. The Clerk said she thought neighbour letters were also not being sent. Cllr. Bond said she would find out and report back. Cllr. Smith also informed Cllr. Bond that, when submitting a response to a planning application on the District Council's online portal, the formatting of the response is lost and he asked if the system could be improved.

4. Minutes and Matters Arising

The minutes of the meeting held on 13th October 2020 were approved as a true and accurate record. There were no matters arising.

5. Planning Consultations

The Council considered three ESC planning consultations:

a) The Council discussed the Cycling and Walking Strategy consultation. Cllr. Julian Cusack said that investment in the footway along the A12 from Middleton to Saxmundham would be beneficial. Cllr. Nigel Smith said that the verge from Fenn Street to Rectory Road could be turned into a proper footpath and made more user friendly. Cllr. Colin Whitbread raised a concern about speeding along the B1122 through Middleton Moor and suggested that the only way to prevent this was to erect two static speed cameras. County Cllr. Richard Smith said this was highly unlikely as there are only two static speed cameras in the

whole of Suffolk. Cllr. Julian Cusack suggested that the Council writes to the Police and Crime Commissioner about dangerous speeding on the road. District Cllr. Jocelyn Bond agreed that it was beneficial to register accident black spots in the consultation submission. She said bridleways and parallel tracks are being considered for the use of cycle routes which will take lighter, slower traffic off the main roads and help to keep cyclists safe.

ACTION: Cllr. Julian Cusack to respond.

b) The Council discussed the Local Planning consultation which asks for views on how the District Council can better engage the community in the planning process. Cllr. T-J Haworth-Culf suggested that the Council submits the points raised earlier in the meeting.

ACTION: Cllr. Nigel Smith to respond.

c) The Council discussed the Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy which aims to reduce the impact of increased levels of recreational use on habitat sites due to new residential development in the Suffolk coast area and to provide a simple, coordinated way for developers to deliver mitigation. The Council decided not to respond.

6. Public Forum Resumed

Cllr. Richard Smith apologised for arriving late due to his attendance at another meeting. The Chairman invited Cllr. Smith to present his report.

Cllr. Richard Smith reported that EDF Energy are holding another round of public consultation beginning on 18th November and lasting for one month. EDF now propose to bring more materials in by sea and rail but Cllr. Smith has not yet seen the detail. He is concerned for communities who live by the railway line as the freight trains will run through the night so as not to affect the passenger services during the day. He said he is cynical about whether this will happen as EDF will be reluctant to work with Network Rail whom they regard as grossly inefficient. EDF are not proposing to put in a passing loop which would allow trains to run through the day and provide a legacy. He said it was sensible to bring more materials in by sea but there needs to be an understanding of the safeguards that will be put in place to protect the sensitive coastline. The Joint Local Authorities Group are holding an event on 26th November comprising three, repeated, one hour sessions. Cllr. Smith is prohibited from taking part but will be present as an observer at all three sessions to hear Town and Parish Councils' views. The sessions will be led by Richard Rout, the County Council Cabinet Member for Sizewell C and his counterpart at the District Council, Craig Rivett. The sessions will be an opportunity to put forward views and to clarify information.

7. Highways, Footpaths, Trees and Green Issues

a) The Council agreed to apply for County Council funding for an electric vehicle charging point. It was decided that the most viable site would be in the Village Hall car park, subject to the agreement of the Management Committee. The charging point must be installed on public land and the Village Hall car park is more accessible than the Recreation Ground car park.

ACTION: Cllr. Julian Cusack to request permission from the Village Hall Management Committee. Clerk to submit an Expression of Interest form.

b) Cllr. Chris Reynolds updated the Council about the Quiet Lanes project. He is now in the process of fully registering the following lanes in the parish: Fordley Road, Littlemoor Road, The Causeway, Moor Road, Hawthorn Road, Title Road and Mill Street. In response to a question raised by Cllr. Lesley Taylor, Cllr. Reynolds agreed to check that the roads still qualify if they have variable speed limits. The next step in the project is to provide the precise location for all the signage posts including photographs and grid references. The Council considered the three proposed consultation phases and agreed to request that it takes place during the first wave from January to March 2021.

ACTION: Cllr. Chris Reynolds and Cllr. Julian Cusack to agree locations for signage.

8. Recreation Ground

Cllr. Julian Cusack reported that he instructed EPS Play Services to carry out urgent safety repairs to the Burma bridge item of play equipment which will cost around £100. This decision was ratified by the Council.

9. ESC Community Partnership Meeting

Cllr. Julian Cusack reported that the substantive item discussed at the meeting was for £12,000 of funding for an arts project. The funding will generate materials for distribution to disadvantaged households and to encourage isolated people to engage in an activity during dark, winter evenings during lockdown. There will be an exhibition of the artwork next spring. There is also £5,000 of funding available to all parishes to apply for projects related to isolation arising from COVID-19 or deprivation.

ACTION: Cllr. Lesley Taylor and Cllr. Julian Cusack to identify ways to help residents to alleviate loneliness.

10. Middleton Moor

Cllr. Julian Cusack reported that the Rural Payments Agency informed him that the original agreement under the High Level Stewardship Scheme provided payment for four ponds at £180 per annum. Subsequently, Natural England requested a report by Suffolk Wildlife Trust which found that one of the ponds (the big pit to the east of Moor Road) is not eligible because it is too dry. The agreement was then amended to provide payment for only three ponds therefore the Council has received the correct amount of payments to date. The HLS Scheme requires the Council to draw up and implement a management plan. The current plan has not been revised since the Council took over management of the site from the District Council in 2003. Cllr. Cusack proposed that the Council appoints a reputable conservation advisor to resurvey the site and update the management plan to ensure it reflects current conservation thinking and complies with the terms of the HLS Scheme.

ACTION: Cllr. Julian Cusack to discuss with the Middleton Moor Group.

11. Summer Wine Group

Cllr. Colin Whitbread reported that a dangerous tree has been made safe and tidied up. The Group will not meet again until next year and their next projects are to cut back the rushes from the pond on the Moor and to clear trees from Minsmere River. A request will be made to the Environment Agency to dredge the New Cut from Rackford Bridge to the Eel's Foot at Eastbridge. Cllr. Julian Cusack suggested that the Council invites the Environment Agency to brief the Council about whether there is any flood risk to the houses on the boundary of Minsmere River.

ACTION: Clerk to contact the Environment Agency.

12. Energy Projects

Cllr. Roy Dowding reported that the Stop Sizewell C campaign group projected their logo and a white elephant on the side of the government's Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy building ahead of reported meetings between the Prime Minister, the Chancellor and the Business Secretary to discuss the civil nuclear programme. Cllr. Dowding also reported that the government proposes to raise its target for offshore wind power capacity by 2030 from 30 gigawatts to 40 gigawatts which will result in more wind turbines and sub-stations on the coastline. Dr Therese Coffey MP is aware and will be seeking some form of solace regarding associated land-based constructions. Referring to EDF's proposal to increase the materials brought in by rail for the Sizewell C development, Cllr. Dowding said that the trains will be unlikely to be any longer than 20 wagons and it is possible that two trains will be run in convoy with a potential for 8 trains to be run each night and 1 during the day. This will result in increased noise particularly when the trains are returning empty. Each train will only replace 55 lorries which will do little to decrease the potential 600 truck movements per day in the early years and 1,200 truck movements per day at the peak of construction. Cllr. Colin Whitbread said Dr Therese Coffey and the government are pro-nuclear. Cllr. Julian Cusack said that it was disappointing that East Suffolk Council, as the most influential Council, has taken a neutral stance. Cllr. Dowding referred to the EN6 paper which forecasted 6 potential new nuclear sites. Two have had developers walk away which leaves 4 and the only one ready to go is Sizewell. Cllr.

Colin Whitbread said it was important that the road infrastructure is in place before the development begins. Cllr. Dowding said they have asked for this in every round of consultation.

13. Village Hall and Primary School

a) The Council discussed the report from the Village Hall Management Group regarding the condition of the roof. The Council agreed to seek funding in the medium term for a new roof. Cllr. Roy Dowding said that Community Action Suffolk may help to identify funding sources for community buildings. Cllr. Julian Cusack suggested the first course of action was to receive a professional report on the condition of the roof which will also be necessary for grant applications. Cllr. Chris Reynolds said the roof tiles may contain asbestos therefore this will need to be considered.

ACTION: Cllr. Nigel Smith to arrange for a building surveyor to assess the condition of the roof.

b) Cllr. Lesley Taylor and Cllr. Julian Cusack agreed to consider ideas for a drop in place for residents during the coronavirus pandemic and to report back.

c) Cllr. Lynda Whitbread reported that the primary school were pleased with the attendance figures; the Reception children have settled in well; the staff are working hard to ensure there are no gaps in the children's learning due to the coronavirus lockdown; and they are keeping everyone safe.

14. Police

There were no reported crimes in the parish in September 2020. Cllr. Nigel Smith said there had recently been a house burglary and a shed burglary on Rectory Road.

15. Finance

a) The Council noted the latest financial position.

ACTION: Clerk to transfer £2,000 from the community account from the premium account.

b) The Council agreed to allocate the Community Infrastructure Levy receipt of £450 to the provision of a disabled car parking space at the Village Hall.

c) Cllr. Colin Whitbread, on behalf of the Summer Wine Group, politely declined the offer of a £200 donation.

ACTION: Donation to be carried forward to next year.

d) The Council agreed to donate £50 to Citizens Advice – Leiston.

e) The Council authorised the payments below:

Details	Payee	Amount	Power
Clerk's Salary	Sharon Smith	£218.40	LGA 1972 s.112
Clerk's PAYE	HMRC	£6.00	LGA 1972 s.112
Clerk's Expenses	Sharon Smith	£17.09	LGA 1972 s.111
Pavilion Electricity	British Gas	£18.40	PHA 1936 s.87

16. Administration

The Council approved meeting dates for 2021.

ACTION: Clerk to add a provisional meeting on 12th January and upload dates to website.

17. Correspondence

The Council noted the correspondence received between 8th October 2020 and 4th November 2020.

18. Questions to the Chair/Items for Next Agenda

Cllr. Roy Dowding agreed to draft and circulate a response to the EDF Energy Sizewell C fifth public consultation.

ACTION: Clerk to add to next month's agenda for approval.

19. Next Meeting

The Council confirmed the date and time of the next virtual meeting of the Council which is scheduled for Tuesday 8th December 2020 at 6:00 pm.

The meeting closed at 7:30 pm.