

MIDDLETON CUM FORDLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY 11 JUNE 2024 AT 7pm AT THE VILLAGE HALL

1 Attendance and Apologies

Attendees:

Cllr Lesley Taylor- Vice Chair
Cllr Graham Lacey
Cllr Giles Piercy
Cllr Kathryn Rowe
Cllr Charles Macdowell
Cllr Chris Reynolds

Apologies:

Cllr Julian Cusack
Cllr Steve Thorpe
Cllr Michelle Kendall

In attendance:

Rachael Salcombe – Parish Clerk
District Cllr Sarah Whitelock (7.10pm-7.30pm)
Three members of the public

2 Councillors' Declarations of Interest. None.

3 Public Forum. A member of the public addressed the council requesting that representation be made to Suffolk County Council Highways Department regarding road signs, in particular, diversion signs. It was agreed that signage is poor in the area, often ambiguous, out of date and obscured by vegetation. Problems also include new road layout signs that have been up for 15 years, and a flood sign still present after 10 years. The member of the public was asked to email his thoughts/findings to the clerk, so that a letter of complaint may be prepared.

A second member of the public acknowledged and thanked the PC for the speed limit reduction on the B1122 to 30mph. However, it was felt that because of this, some drivers have become frustrated and are overtaking vehicles, thus the road remains as dangerous as before. Cllr Macdowell confirmed that average speed cameras are scheduled to be erected at the Yoxford turnoff, through to the new entrance to SZC. It is, however, an unknown when these will be up and running. The member of public informed the PC that he had spoken with SZC directly who advised him that traffic will be regulated by the local police and that no average speed cameras will be erected. Cllr Macdowell advised that there is no question that this will happen, and it was suggested, perhaps, that there is a lack of communication between colleagues at SZC. Cllr Macdowell will raise the matter again at the next Transport Forum. Cllr Macdowell also advised that he is in possession of maps that indicate the locations of the speed cameras, should anyone wish to view them. Cllr Whitelock also offered to bring this matter up at the next SZC top team meeting in July.

Cllr Whitelock shared key elements from the latest ESC report.

- Feed the bees campaign is being extended.
- A booklet has been produced (as a direct result of the energy projects in the area) to address mental health within the Ward. These will be made available in libraries, GP surgeries and other public places. Training is to be made available also. There will be a leaflet drop through every household in the Ward providing key information about the booklets and access via a QR code. This initiative has been paid for by Community Partnerships and more booklets are available upon request to Cllr Whitelock. **Action: Clerk to upload contents onto village website.**
- ESC now has access to £500,000 to aid those affected by flooding, in the future.

- Parking for residents in Leiston has been reduced from £600 to £300 per annum. Parking has become a premium since the arrival of SZC workers, who will eventually make use of the park and ride once it has been built.
- A new litter campaign has been launched; Keep Suffolk Beautiful – East Suffolk is amazing. Due to lack of funding, kits are being offered to volunteer groups to address their own particular neighbourhoods.

A member of the public advised that he belongs to a team of eight volunteers who help keep the village tidy along the highways, but raised concerns about whether this is permitted as he has received conflicting information. Cllr Whitelock offered her card and suggested that the concerns are emailed to her, and she will seek advice.

4 Minutes

- a) The Council approved the minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held on 14 May 2024 and the Annual Parish meeting held on 14 May 2024.
- b) **Matters arising and Action Points**
 - Removal of Stop SZC signs c/f.
 - The go ahead for pond works has been given. This work will fit in with the Great Crested Newt lifecycle. Notice will be given to Cllr Taylor when works commence. This will be the first of yearly maintenance works.
 - Advertisement for a Moor Maintenance contractor was published in the May newsletter.
 - PC objections to proposed Eco-camping Planning Application submitted to ESC Planning Department.
 - Flowerpots behind the water pump on the Moor c/f.
 - Agreed requested name change for the path approaching the church has been advised to the Church Warden.

5 Sizewell C

- Cllr Macdowell to request the slow down zone to be extended past Thatched House.
- Concerns were raised that, due to the 30mph speed limit on the B1122, traffic will increase on the B1125.
- It was agreed that the 24-hour notices given by SZC for wide load notifications is not sufficient, especially as the loads are going to become more frequent, heavier and slower mover. The impact will be felt further during harvest time with multiple tractors on the B1122.
 - Cllr Lacey is continuing to meet with Cllr Weaver from Kelsale PC to discuss Fordley Road speed limit, signage for passing places and HGV signage. Sugar Beet lorries, which have to use Fordley Road highlights the problem. Although it was agreed that EDF should absorb the costs, in the first instance a joint letter will be sent to Cllr Richard Smith, cc Steve Merritt, at Suffolk County Council.

Action: Clerk to put all wide load notifications onto the village website.

6 Councillors Reports

- a) Village Hall. No report.
- b) Middleton Primary School. No report.
- c) Highways, footpaths and trees. No report.
- d) Middleton Moor.
Substation. c/f

Pond. There is an £800 grant for the year for the Moor from Natural England, this will cover the cost of the yearly maintenance of the pond. External areas on the pond also need work as currently unattractive.

Moor Maintenance. There has been no response from the advertisement in May's newsletter. Contact has been made with acquaintances provided by the Summer Winers, but interest is for the hay only and not the overall maintenance. Nonsuch Farm have provided a proforma, detailing a 5-year contract/rental agreement, this would involve bailing and removing the hay at no cost to the PC, with all other works to be charged at £150 per day for labour plus basic tools and £50-£75 for mechanical support. The work is anticipated to be two days per year. The PC have ringfenced funds of £3,000 for the Moor (Rural England). It was agreed to pay for this year's work out of these reserves, following which the cost will be built into the budget/precept. Nonsuch Farm is an organic farm and therefore the PC would need to obtain a Soil Association Certificate meaning that, as landowners, we would need to agree to work organically. **Action: Cllr Taylor to write to Nonsuch Farm to request a quote for a 5-year fixed contract.**

It was agreed that the Moor Management Group should be kept informed of the progress made regarding the Pond maintenance and the management of the Moor. **Action: Cllr Taylor to email the Moor Management Group accordingly.**

- e) Causeway Farm. The expectation (subject to confirmation from Suffolk County Council) is that the farm is to be lotted up. It is anticipated that the PC will be offered some input before this idea is made public.

7 Village Green Group

Grass Cutting. Compliments have been received and the village green group would like to keep grass cutting on a regular basis. Wildflower sowing was unsuccessful, although there are now plants in pots. It was agreed that cutting of the village green grass needs to be budgeted for (average 2 cuts per month for 6 months @ £20 per cut = £240), in the meantime, it was agreed to try and source a volunteer (equipment is available). **Action: Clerk to put an ad in the next newsletter.**

The Summer Winers are historically thanked for their work in the village by way of a donation in the sum of £250. It is believed that this was omitted this year and needs to be rectified. **Action: Cllr Cusack to make enquiries regarding annual donation and possible volunteer(s) for grass cutting.**

8 Finance

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

| Details | Payee | Amount | Power |
|---------------------------|------------------|---------|----------------|
| Website Domain Charges | IONOS | £12.00 | LGA 1972 s.142 |
| Clerk Overtime – May 2024 | Rachael Salcombe | £112.00 | LGA 1972 s.112 |

It was agreed to put the static speed camera back on the agenda as it was felt that the camera will not now be needed on the B1122 due to the average speed cameras imminent arrival, but may be needed on the B1125, as it is felt that the traffic will increase on this stretch of road.

- c) Annual Accounts for the financial year 23-24 approved.
d) Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) of the AGAR approved.
e) Accounting Statements (Section 2) of the AGAR approved.

- f) Certificate of Exemption approved.
- g) Exercise of public rights period agreed as 14 June 2024 to 14 July 2024
- h) Internal Audit Report for 2023-2024 reviewed.

Action: Clerk to upload Internal Audit Report, AGAR and Exercise of public rights date on village website. Clerk to send Certificate of Exemption to the External Auditor.

9 Administration

Data Protection Officer. The PC were advised that a DPO is not a requirement of the PC because we do not process sensitive personal data on a large scale, however we do need to have a named Data Controller, typically the clerk, and this was agreed. Action: Clerk to update Information Protection Policy, adopted 13/3/18 from Data Protection Officer to Data Control Officer.

10 The Bell

Nomination for listing as an Asset of Community Value was submitted to ESC on 6 June 2024. ESC has written, in return, requesting a satellite image showing property boundaries. Action: Cllr Rowe to source and advise Clerk.

11 Village Path approach to Church

The contractor who quoted for the works is no longer available. Action: Cllr Piercy to supply the Clerk with details of other possible contractors.

12 Flooding/maintenance/Emergency Plan. See 5. SZC above.

13 Correspondence.

An email has been received from the Church Warden regarding the Mill Street road closure on 31 May that obstructed the weekend's scheduled Open Gardens, resulting in extra logistic work for the organisers. Action: Clerk to write to SCC, Highways requesting that warning be given in the future.

14 Items for Next Agenda

15 Next Meeting

The date and time of the next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 9 July 2024, at 7pm, at the Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 8pm.