

# MIDDLETON CUM FORDLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 19<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2022  
AT 7:00 PM AT THE VILLAGE HALL

## 1. Attendance and Apologies

### Attendees:

Cllr. Julian Cusack – Chair  
Cllr. Colin Whitbread  
Cllr. Steve Thorpe  
Cllr. Chris Reynolds  
Cllr. Lesley Taylor  
Cllr. Graham Lacey  
Cllr. Lynda Whitbread

### Apologies for absence:

Cllr. Roy Dowding – written and accepted  
District Cllr. Tony Cooper  
District Cllr. Tom Daly  
District Cllr. Russ Rainger

### In attendance:

Sharon Smith - Clerk/RFO  
County Cllr. Richard Smith  
2 members of the public

## 2. Casual Vacancy

The Council accepted the resignation of Cllr. Dennis Peel for personal reasons. The Clerk explained that the vacancy will be advertised by the District Council and, if no by-election is called within 14 working days, the Council may co-opt an eligible applicant to fill the vacancy at its meeting in June 2022.

**ACTION: Clerk to inform the District Council.**

## 3. Councillors' Declarations of Interest

None.

## 4. Public Forum

County Cllr. Richard Smith said the government's recent actions and words with regard to Sizewell C were extraordinary as they appear to demonstrate predetermination which may provide grounds for a judicial review. The Chairman replied that he was less surprised by the way the government behaves but, unfortunately, all the signs appear to show that the DCO will be approved. He said there has already been talk among action groups about preparing for a judicial review on various issues and advice has already been sought on a pro bono basis and may be expanded. The Chairman said it is likely that the Parish Council would support a judicial review but no commitment has been made at this time.

Cllr. Smith also reported that the County Council's bid for £77m from the government's Bus Better Back scheme was unsuccessful. Only 31 out of the 79 applicants were successful and most of the funding was given to North East England as part of the levelling-up scheme, however Norfolk received £50m from the £3bn pot. Cllr. Smith said he was bitterly disappointed but there may be smaller pots of funding available. He has contacted his counterpart in Norfolk to find out why their application was successful and whether any lessons can be learned. Cllr. Smith said he was also disappointed to learn about Suffolk's unsuccessful bid from the editor of the East Anglian Daily Times as the Department of Transport had issued a press release earlier than informing the applicants.

## 5. Planning

a) The Council agreed it had no objections to planning applications DC/22/1078/LBC and DC/22/1070/FUL - Change of use of existing redundant agricultural barns (listed at grade II) and associated external areas to private dwelling, including conversion works, demolitions and alterations - proposed conversion of agricultural building at Valley Farm House, Leiston Road. However, the Council agreed that it would prefer that the dwelling is not used as a second home or holiday letting business and that these

restrictions should be secured as a planning condition or created under a s.106 agreement.

**ACTION: Chairman and Clerk to draft wording and inform the planning department.**

b) The Council agreed to support planning application - Approval of Reserved Matters of DC/19/2104/OUT - Construction of dwelling and associated works, including provision of a new vehicular access - Details of the appearance, landscaping, layout and scale - Land At Mill House. Mill Street.

**ACTION: Clerk to inform the planning department.**

## **6. Minutes**

The Council approved as accurate the minutes of the meetings held on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2022 and 19<sup>th</sup> March 2022.

## **7. Matters Arising**

The Chairman summarised a response from the Environment Agency regarding the New Cut. As part of their routine maintenance programme, they undertake a weed cut between Reckford Bridge and the Minsmere Sluice to maintain conveyance of water. They said this approach takes into account the number of properties at risk of flooding in Middleton and Eastbridge based on their current hydraulic modelling for the Minsmere River and its tributaries. The Council agreed to accept the Environment Agency offer to meet Councillors on-site to walk the river and discuss the specific concerns that the Council and the wider community may have.

**ACTION: Clerk to contact the Environment Agency.**

## **8. Councillors' Reports**

a) Energy Projects – the Clerk confirmed that EDF has agreed to attend the Council's public meeting in June 2022 to brief the Council about the Deed of Obligation. The Council discussed the response received from EDF to the Council's letter following the B1122 site visit with EDF and their consultants. It was agreed to respond to EDF that the Council will continue to raise the ongoing issues at the B1122 Early Years Working Group meetings. The Council agreed to endorse a letter written by the Anglian Energy Project Alliance to the Secretary of State for BEIS complaining about the prejudicial and inconsistent comments made by him with regard to issues of community consent for Sizewell C. Cllr. Steve Thorpe was authorised to contact Westleton Parish Council to discuss concerns about the B1125 if Sizewell C goes ahead.

**ACTION: Clerk to respond to EDF and the AEPA. Cllr. Steve Thorpe to contact Westleton Parish Council.**

b) Highways/Footpaths – the Chairman reported that there is a large, linear pothole on the verge of the Causeway.

**ACTION: Clerk to report to Highways.**

c) Village Hall – Cllr. Graham Lacey reported that the project to replace the roof was complete and it has been signed off by the Health and Safety Executive. Cllr. Lesley Taylor reported that the last Drop-In Centre was held at the end of March. Attendance had fallen and the centre served its purpose to provide community support during the winter season. The centre may resume from November onwards, subject to attendance. The Council recorded a vote of thanks to Cllr. Lesley Taylor and Cllr. Lynda Whitbread for running the centre.

d) Hastoe Housing – Cllr. Steve Thorpe reported that he spoke to the Site Manager who was under the impression that the hedging whips would be planted at the end of March in accordance with the landscaping plan. Cllr. Thorpe said the area has been raked and grass seed sown but the whips are still not in and it is becoming too late in the season. Cllr. Thorpe also said that pedestrians often cross the corner to reach Back Road rather than using the footpath to the road entrance. The Council supported his suggestion that a footpath should be created, by leaving a gap in the hedging, to allow pedestrians to continue to cross the corner. The Council noted correspondence received from a resident asking for the fencing to remain at the rear of the properties.

**ACTION: Cllr. Steve Thorpe to follow up with Hastoe.**

e) Village Green – the Clerk reported that the Council has been granted a Talking Bench from the ESC Community Partnership which will be delivered shortly. It was agreed to ask for a volunteer, via the newsletter, to repair the existing bench which is dedicated to a former Council Chairman. If no volunteers are forthcoming, the Council agreed that any resident is welcome to collect the bench for their own purpose.

**ACTION: Clerk to draft an article for the newsletter.**

f) Primary School – Cllr. Lynda Whitbread said she would resume voluntary reading in school next week.

i) Middleton Moor – the Council noted that a meeting has been arranged by the Management Group but none of the Council representatives are able to attend. The Chairman said the Suffolk Wildlife Trust's revised management plan for the Moor has been delayed until May/June and he reiterated the Council's agreement that any decision about planting trees will be made when the Council has had time to consider the revised plan. Cllr. Lesley Taylor recommended that the ragwort on the Moor should be pulled up as it is an offence for it to grow near foraged produce but no decision was made. The Council noted that the Moor has suffered damage from a tractor. Cllr. Colin Whitbread offered to speak to the tenant's landlord regarding this. The Council agreed that any work undertaken on the Moor must have prior approval by the Council, particularly if any payment is to be made.

**ACTION: Chairman to contact the Moor Management Group.**

j) Burial Ground – progress to register the first title and replace the gate is ongoing.

k) Future Projects – it was agreed that the Chairman and the Clerk would research the pros and cons of creating a Neighbourhood Plan.

## 9. Parish Matters

a) Cllr. Graham Lacey circulated a proposal to improve mobility access to the Church from the Village Green. A geotex matting and gravel could be laid, about 3 metres square, to provide a hard surface. The approximate costing for the groundworks will be £5,000 to £6,000. It was agreed that the Chairman and Cllr. Graham Lacey should consult the nearby residents and the Church to explore alternative solutions.

b) The Council granted permission to the Middleton Recreation Ground Fundraising Committee to replace a bench on the Village Green commemorating the Middleton Women's Football Team circa 1960s to 1980s.

**ACTION: Clerk to inform the MRGFC.**

c) The Council agreed to support the provision of transport to Yoxford's newly created youth club.

## 10. Finance

a) The Council noted the latest financial position, including receipt of a Drop-In Centre grant of £500 from ESC and £0.31 of bank interest.

b) The Council authorised the payments below:

Details	Payee	Amount	Power
Clerk's Salary	Sharon Smith	£122.40	LGA 1972 s.112
Clerk's Expenses	Sharon Smith	£24.01	LGA 1972 s.112
Drop-In Centre Expenses	Lesley Taylor	£111.40	LGA (MP) 1976 s.19
Drop-In Centre Hall Hire	Middleton Village Hall	£80.00	LGA (MP) 1976 s.19

## 11. Correspondence

The Council reviewed the correspondence received between 4<sup>th</sup> March 2022 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.

## 12. Questions to the Chair/Items for the Next Agenda

The Council discussed the leaflet about superfast broadband delivered to all households. Currently, superfast fibre cabling is only available to cabinets with copperwire cabling to properties. The project will deliver superfast fibre cabling to properties. Cllr. Graham Lacey said, that without this upgrade, users may run out of speed to keep up with the latest technology. It was agreed to invite the provider to brief the Council and the public about the service at the Annual Parish Meeting.

**ACTION: Cllr. Graham Lacey to contact the provider.**

### **13. Next Meeting**

The Council agreed the date and times of the Annual Parish Meeting and the Annual Meeting of the Council which are scheduled for Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2022 at 6:00 pm and 7:00 pm respectively at the Village Hall.

## **MIDDLETON CUM FORDLEY PARISH COUNCIL AS SOLE TRUSTEE OF THE MIDDLETON RECREATION GROUND TRUST**

1. The Council authorised payment of £1,302.84 to Eastern Play Services Limited for the installation of the cradle swing (LGA (MP) 1976 s.19)
2. The Chairman reported that he has instructed Eastern Play Services Limited to repair the zip line brake and that an invoice will be received in due course.
3. The Council noted correspondence from a resident raising concerns about the current method of mole control. The Chairman agreed to contact the pest controller to ask if it is possible to use humane traps . It was noted that these will need to be checked regularly and that problems will arise as to where to set the moles free. The Council agreed that some method of mole control must be carried out as the play equipment safety inspection regards mole hills as a trip hazard.

The meeting closed at 8:50 pm.