

MIDDLETON CUM FORDLEY PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 9 JULY 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".

1 Attendance and Apologies

Attendees:

Cllr Julian Cusack
Cllr Steve Thorpe
Cllr Charles Macdowell
Cllr Chris Reynolds
Cllr Kathryn Rowe
Cllr Michele Kendall

Apologies accepted for absence:

Cllr Giles Piercy

In attendance:

Rachael Salcombe – Parish Clerk
Dist Cllr Sarah Whitelock
Members of the public x 3

2 Councillors' Declarations of Interest. None

3 Public Forum. Dist. Cllr Whitelock reported the following:

- ESC has submitted the relevant representations to the Planning Directorate objecting to the National Grid Sea Link report.
- The planned upgrades to Leiston, Waterlane, and Deben leisure centres will focus on replacing outdated gas boilers with cutting-edge air source heat pump systems for heating, and CO2 heat pumps for hot water in some locations, significantly cutting energy use and emissions at all three sites. Additionally, Deben Leisure Centre will benefit from a new roof, and all three centres will gain further solar panel installations to help offset increased electricity use from the switch to electric-only systems.
- Village halls, community centres and other 'community hubs' across East Suffolk are invited to apply for a grant of up to £15,000 for upgrades, improvements and essential repairs.
- ESC has implemented an improvement programme to address issues following a comprehensive 'stock condition' survey of its social housing. The detailed survey commissioned by the Council has identified that some of the homes fall below expected standards and the Council is now working with the Regulator of Social Housing, to resolve these issues.
- A statement from Cllr Tom Daly, ESC's Cabinet Member for Energy Projects, following confirmation by the government of £14.2bn funding for the construction of the Sizewell C Nuclear Power Station:
"East Suffolk Council believes that truly renewable energy, such as offshore and onshore wind and solar, provides a better long-term answer to the energy security and carbon reduction future of the UK. However, with this announcement, the Sizewell C project now proceeds with certainty, and we will work closely with Sizewell C Ltd and our technical advisors to ensure that the funding we secured for local communities will genuinely benefit the people we serve."
- More than a tonne of end-of-life fishing gear has been prevented from posing a potential hazard to marine life following a successful recovery programme. A four-day appeal for nets, ropes, plastic pots and fish crates were held in Lowestoft by a team of partner organisations belonging to the Eastern and Southern Plastics Coalition (ESPC), during the week of World Oceans Day.

The activity recovered 1,194 kg for recycling, including gill nets containing the equivalent of several kilometres of filament, line and rope, as well as more than a tonne of additional material unable to be recycled but now destined for safe disposal.

- County Council elections and elections for the mayor will be held in May 2026. It is understood that the councillors elected next May will only serve for two years, up to 2028, when the new unitary authorities will be vested. It is expected but not confirmed that in 2027 there will be elections for the shadow unitary authorities, who will serve for one year, and when the authority vests in May 2028 these will become the councillors of the new authorities. It is also expected but not confirmed that the term of office of the current ESC councillors will be extended by one year to May 2028.

4 Minutes

- a) The Council approved the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 11 June 2025.
- b) Matters Arising and Action Points
 - Report on village path approach to church – c/f
 - Clerk supplied Middleton Moor Management Group with details regarding travellers. It was agreed that individuals should not approach travellers and should either contact the police or the parish clerk, should the need arise. At a recent Middleton Moor Management Group meeting, it was agreed that it would be inappropriate and an overreaction to take measures to make access onto the Moor difficult.
 - Cllrs Macdowell and Piercy to provide the village newsletter and clerk with direct online links to access SZC maps – c/f.
 - The PC have registered as an interested party for the Sea Link enquiry.
 - Audit 2025 documents have been uploaded onto the village website.
 - Councillor vacancy has been advertised on noticeboards and village website. Closing date 10 July 2025.

- 5 **Causeway Farm.** Following the consultation with the parish (February 2025), interest was shown in focusing on the Recreation Ground, rather than the proposed Hastoe Field project. Following this, the Middleton Recreation Ground Working Group has been resurrected, comprising parish council members and village residents. An application is being prepared for the SZC Community Fund for play equipment and other upgrades to the recreation ground. It is understood that the village cannot put in an application for both the recreation ground and the proposed Hastoe Field project. Although disappointing, the PC are unable to progress the Hastoe Field application until it is known whether SCC are willing to sell the land to us, and as there is no sense of timing or valuation, there is a risk that we may keep this project going only for it to fizzle out. The meeting was reminded that there is a) another SZC scheme, not yet 'open', that may provide further funding, and b) the possibility of a loan.

Talks are still taking place between SCC and Suffolk Wildlife Trust regarding the marshland on the farm.

6 Sizewell C and other Energy Projects.

- A Main Development Site Meeting took place last week. The final investment decision on SZC continues to be pushed back and is now anticipated for late summer.
- The Community Fund have dedicated over half a million pounds to date.
- SZC are funding a new college on the coast. There is a meeting regarding this on Wednesday 23 July at Leiston United Church.
- Illuminated, slow down signs are to be placed on the B1122. The slowdown signs will illuminate as a car approaches. Concerns were raised over light pollution during the night. **Action: Cllr Macdowell to request that they only operate between the hours of 7am – 11pm.** The exact location of the signs is unknown, but there will be two, one for each direction. **Action: Cllr Cusack to speak with residents.**

- Road Closures: -
11-13 July overnight, 8pm – 5am, Lovers Land crossing.
Pretty Road will be shut for a long period over the autumn.
19-20 July B1122/A12 junction closed (water company)
- There will be no wide loads during Latitude and bank holidays.
- There is currently an average of 273 HGVs a day. This will be doubled by December. (There is a 600 HGVs per day self-imposed cap.)
- Aldeburgh Town Council enquired as to whether the community fund applications could be simplified.
- Both Middleton and Theberton PC representatives at the latest NTF, reported on the unacceptable, aggressive nature of the escort police experienced by locals.
- Both Middleton and Theberton PC representatives raised the lack of broadband for their villages, following SZC's proud announcement for recently supplying broadband connection to 5,000 homes. Cllr Macdowell wrote a press release voicing frustration and disappointment, and this has been carried by the EADT
- Leiston is having issues with HMOs (family homes are being sold and converted into housing with multiple occupancy), raising concerns about homelessness and parking issues. SZC confirm that they are 'alive to what is happening'.
- MPC invited SZC to give a briefing to the village, which was declined. SZC have, however, offered to speak with the PC, including a presentation followed by Q & A with councillors, not the public. It was felt that at the last presentation, the PC were spoken to rather than with by SZC causing some frustration. It was agreed to request a presentation later in the year, when more time has passed and there will be more to report on. MPC will be particularly interested in SZCs plans for landscaping around the link road. It was agreed to offer an invite to SZC for our October meeting.
- Cllr Macdowell provided the meeting with two websites for updates: [Sizewell C Works Tracker - Track SZC Projects & Get Alerts for New Activities](#) and [Roadworks in Suffolk - Suffolk County Council](#)
- It was confirmed that a Traffic Crisis Management system in place. SZC will stop trucks leaving the site and warn individual workers leaving the site. It is the responsibility of SCC to manage the impact of non-Sizewell C traffic of incidents.

7 Emergency Planning Group – c/f

8 Councillors Reports

- Village Hall. Nothing to report.
- Middleton Primary School. Nothing to report.
- Highways, footpaths and trees. A problem in Rectory Road has been reported by two residents. The hedge by the substation is now extending out onto the highway causing an obstruction. A complaint has been made to UK Power Networks, who have agreed to visit the site and produce an action plan.
- Middleton Moor. Cllr Cusack attended the recent Middleton Moor Management Group meeting. A new fence and gate have been constructed adjacent to Middleton Moor on Moor Road. A hedge has been removed and replaced with a gate and fencing on adjacent land. Access is gained across common land to the new gate. The PC was not approached to discuss this in advance and, to date we have not had an explanation although it has been confirmed that the works were not carried out by SZC.

A written request was made by the Middleton Moor Management Group that the PC lodge a complaint with ESC regarding the apparent unauthorised track across common land. It was agreed to wait until the PC hears back from the landowner.

[Subsequent to the meeting Cllr Cusack has established that the new access was created by the landowner to provide an alternative emergency access in the event that their normal access is interrupted by the works associated with the Middleton Moor Link Road roundabout.]

There is an ash tree opposite Moor House, near the pit, that the Moor Group would like a TPO against. The PC agreed to action this request. **Action: Cllr Cusack to make the request to ESC.**

The Moor Group have also requested that the PC contact SZC regarding rutting along Littlemoor Road, caused by works to create accesses. **Action: Cllr Macdowell to contact SZC with a request to make good.**

A member of the public raised concerns that there are still no white lines or cats' eyes along the B1122. Cllr Macdowell confirmed that attempts were made to have a meeting on site and that he has recently restarted the process.

9 Finance

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

Details	Payee	Amount	Power
Data Protection Registration Certificate	Information Commissioner's Office	£52.00	LGA 1972 s. 142
P30 Q1 NI Contributions	HMRC	£61.62	LGA 1972 s. 112

- 10 **New Councillor(s).** An interview was arranged between two councillors and a prospective councillor, who, unfortunately, was unable to make the appointment. **Action: Clerk to re-arrange.** The Notice of Vacancy in Office of Councillor for the second vacancy ends tomorrow (10 July). The vacancy may now be filled by co-option.
- 11 **Village Path approach to Church.** See above.
- 12 **Village Noticeboards.** A resident on the green has advised that during bad weather the doors on the noticeboard by the Bell Inn work themselves open. Upon inspection, it was reported that the doors probably come open due to the angle of the posts in the ground. It was agreed that a couple of bolts will rectify the problem, along with a coat of oil. **Action: Cllr Thorpe to make good the noticeboard by the Bell Inn.** It was noted that the village hall noticeboard would benefit from repair also. **Action: Cllr Thorpe to raise at the next VH meeting.**
- 13 **Website Accessibility Statement.** The meeting agreed to a) update the parish's Website Accessibility Statement, to include correct email address, address and telephone number, b) change reference from version 2.1 to 2.2 and c) add to the document 'If you have any problems accessing the material please contact the clerk'. **Action: Clerk to make necessary changes and upload new version to the village website.**
- 14 **Correspondence.** An Extraordinary meeting for planning application DC/25/2616/FUL was agreed for Tuesday 22 July, 6pm at the pavilion.

Following a request from Suffolk County Council, Children and Young People Services, it was confirmed that there are currently no Emergency Bleed Control Kits in the village. **Action: Clerk to report back.**
- 15 **Items for Next Agenda.** None.
- 16 **Next Meeting.** The date and time of the next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 10 September 2025 at 7pm, at the Village Hall.
The meeting closed at 8.15pm.

