

Minutes of a Middlezoy Parish Council Meeting held at the Village Hall on

Tuesday 22nd April 2025, at 7.00pm

Present: Cllrs Becky Turner (Chair); Ian Campbell; Barry Paffey; Cllr Martin arrived at 8 p.m. (SC) & seven members of the public.

031/25 Public speaking on any agenda items

- It was noted that all the new defibrillators have been installed, commissioned, and added to the national database.
- An update was given on the Wessex Water road closure and access will be available to the Village Hall.
- On May 4th there will be a “We’ll Meet Again” event at 3 p.m. on the field as part of the VE 80th anniversary celebrations.

032/25 Apologies for absence and declarations of interest and dispensations

Cllr Paul Baker; Sophie Boulton.

033/25 To approve the minutes from Tuesday March 10th, 2025

The minutes were approved and signed as a true record by the Chair.

034/25 Chairman’s report

Cllr Baker had sent a written report:

The parish chairs meeting at Wembdon village hall was hosted by Sir Ashley Fox MP. This was an interesting day. One of the areas talked about was about flooding within Somerset and there is between £3,000 and £20,000 for local communities to help improve flood prevention. This fund is available, and parishes can apply through the Somerset drainage board. A guidance document can be found through the SRA. This is possibly not going to be applicable to Middlezoy, but there is more information on the drainage board website. On the map they showed us that the areas surrounding the village are a level 2/3 flood risk.

The housing target growth year on year will be 0.8% growth rate, this includes every single area in the country. A new national planning policy is coming into being within the planning and infrastructure bill. One of the main changes to the planning is likely to be developments greater than one hundred houses will go out to consultation. Below one hundred houses it is likely to be left to the local planning officer to decide the merits of the development and will have the power to approve the scheme without any consultation. Local authorities will also be able to compulsory purchase land for new building.

If we were considering having a Neighbourhood Plan, we would have to wait until the Somerset local plan is in place; if we did it before our Neighbourhood Plan would be invalid.

As there is only one planning enforcement officer for the whole of the old Sedgemoor area, it was suggested that all the parishes and towns within that area club together to purchase the services of a second planning enforcement officer, whether this would work or not is another matter and how much it would cost each individual parish is unclear.

Cllr Baker also went to a meeting to look at the Somerset local plan. This was held at the Canalside in Bridgwater. This was informative; the net result is that there will be a lot more housing in and around villages. However, a lot of the land around Middlezoy is considered unsuitable as it comes into the level 2 Level 3 flood plain. This was the last of four consultations conducted by Somerset council. The outcome of each of the four meetings will be collated and the local plan for Somerset will be formulated and published in due course.

035/25 PLANNING

(a) Planning application number: 34/24/00013/JMS

Proposal: Erection of two storey side West and rear North extensions on site of existing single storey extensions (to be demolished).

Location: The Old Fire Station, 2 Nethermoor Road, Middlezoy, Bridgwater, Somerset, TA7 0PG

THIS APPLICATION HAS BEEN APPROVED 09/04/25

(b) Motocross at Wynns Hill Farm, Middlezoy, TA7 OPD

Discussion took place with input from residents and the Chair of Burrowbridge PC.

Several complaints had been received from residents in the vicinity of this property regarding, what appears to be, unlicensed and uninsured motocross events taking place on a regular basis.

The local planning enforcement department are aware of the situation and are following this matter up.

The clerk will write to the landowner for his response to our concerns.

The Vice-Chair of Westonzoyland PC also raised concerns regarding similar events taking place in their parish which had been granted planning permission, but appeared to be in breach of their conditions.

It was agreed that the parishes concerned would share information and work together on the issues raised.

036/25 To receive reports from County Cllr Martin

Cllr Martin asked to be kept informed of issues raised regarding the lack of a social housing provider & any highways matters with which he can assist.

037/25 To discuss Highways issues in the village and speed limit on the A372

Concerns remain and discussion took place as to whether CCTV near to the junction, to capture any vehicles exiting onto the A372 through the no exit sign were feasible.

The clerk will contact Traffic Management for advice and guidance.

038/25 Middlezoy Community Project Update

The next event will be musical bingo on the 10th of May.

039/25 LCN Reports

At the LCN meeting there was a presentation on the landscape recovery project, full details on their website. There is a certain amount of money within their scheme for improving footpaths in and around villages, again details within their web site.

There was an interesting talk from the Hestercombe children and young people's project, and this was about how a group of villages and towns, which included North Petherton, looked at the needs of 10- to 16-year-olds within their communities and the fact that there were no youth clubs supporting these children. The group looked at how much it would cost to put facilities in place to support these youngsters. Once they had decided how much it would cost, they looked at how many children within that age group in the different communities this number was then divided that number by the total cost of the project, so each community only paid for the number of children they had that would benefit. North Petherton paid the lion's share. They were able to purchase the use of a youth bus which went from community to community, and this enabled the youngsters to access activities within their area. Whether that would work for us and is something that if we feel needs to be investigated further, we will need a volunteer to pursue the matter.

Liz Parfitt gave a brief update on Westonzoyland airfield and the problems with Towns and Durstins. She explained both organisations are running roughshod over planning, Natural England, and various other government bodies. She also pointed out that information about the biodiversity of an area and any triple SI 's that may be within an area can be found on the magic map website and this is something that she has been using to see if Towns and Durstins are being compliant.

040/25 Grant Application – Wild Middlezoy

It was unanimously agreed to donate £500 towards a polytunnel on the allotments.

041/25 Parish Council AGM

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be the Annual General Meeting when the Chairman will be elected for the forthcoming year.

042/25 Affordable Homes

Emails have been exchanged with Somerfield homes without success on this matter. It is hoped that a social housing provider can be found soon.

043/25 VE Day Celebrations

Sunday May 4th at 3 p.m. on the playing fields.

044/25 FINANCE

1. (a) Clerk's Salary (March 2025) £339.33
(b) Clerk's PAYE (March 2025) £86.29
(c) Clerk's expenses (March 2025) £48.80
(d) Middlezoy Community – Hall Hire £24.00
(e) G Wagden James – Grounds – March £356.67
(f) SALC – Annual Subscription £348.63
(g) Holy Cross Church – polytunnel grant £500

All invoices include VAT where applicable.

The Clerk was given permission to set up the above payments online.

1. Bank Reconciliation for March

The reconciliation was approved and signed as a true record by the Chair.

2. Audit Forms

(a) Annual Governance Statement 2024/25

The Annual Governance Statement was approved and signed by the Chair

(b) Accounting Statement 2024/25

The Accounting Statement was approved and signed by the Chair.

045/25 Councillors Matters of Report

Cllr Campbell informed councillors that he was updating the Welcome Booklet and that it would hopefully be ready for printing in September.

Date of next meeting – TUESDAY MAY 20th, 2025, at 7.00pm in the Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 8.13 p.m.