

Minutes of Ufford Parish Council MeetingHeld on 21st January 2020 ~ 7.00pm

The Community Hall, The Avenue, Ufford

Present

Cllr. Kathryn Jones (Chair)
Cllr. Pat Edworthy
Cllr. Ashley O'Malley

Cllr. Keith Bennett
Cllr. Jane Hawthorne
Cllr. David Pearce

Cllr. Nick Crocker
Cllr. Stephen Mayhew

Judi Hallett (Clerk)

Dist. Cllr. Carol Poulter

Cnty. Cllr. Alexander Nicoll

3 members of the public were present

1. To receive Apologies for absence:

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr. John Skinner (Away), Cllr. Guy Foskett (Previous Engagement) and Cllr. David Findley (Away). These were noted.

2. To receive any Declarations of Interest on Agenda Items and any applications for dispensation:

There were no declarations of interest or applications for dispensation.

3. Public Session:**a) Reports or comment from any member of the public (notes only):**

- There were no comments

b) Reports or comment from SCDC and SCC Councillors:

- **Dist. Cllr. Carol Poulter** – Cllr. Poulter reported on the following items: ES Council is going paperless; future reports will be more relevant to the Ward; Community Partnership Scheme – a new innovation ESC is bringing in to encourage parishes and towns to work together, first meeting on 8th Feb at the Parish Hall in Wickham Market and all ideas are welcome. Cllr. Poulter indicated that she had some funds left in her Enabling Communities budget and that requests should be put forward as soon as possible.
- **Cnty. Cllr. Alexander Nicoll** – Cllr. Nicoll reported on the following items: Ipswich Northern Bypass – Cllr. Nicoll is opposed to all options, consultation was not properly run and gave no option to oppose all routes, cost is extortionate and better spent elsewhere, meeting held with Nick Green (one member of the STOP Campaign), project will require an extra 30,000 – 50,000 houses to fund, Sizewell will introduce a number of other vehicles; Sizewell C – Planning Application expected shortly, many items need to be resolved and consultation has been disappointing; Caravan Site in Ufford – it may be worth speaking to Katy Sandalls (EADT) to ask her to push for comments from ESC, A representation to the Local Government Ombudsman may be possible through our MP. Cllr. Nicoll indicated that he had approximately £1,000 remaining in his Locality Budget for 2019/20 and any suitable projects would be considered for funding, ideally requests would need to be in by the end of January.

Chair's initials.....

4. To discuss and agree responses to the following Planning Applications:

- a) DC/20/0069/LBC (Listed Building Consent) Relocation of Kitchen & internal & external alterations- Church Cottage, Church Lane, Ufford. Councillors made the following comments:
- Virtually entirely internal alterations
 - The main concern is that the building looks the same on the outside
 - The only external work is the reintroduction of a stable door
 - **Conclusion: No objection** - The Clerk was asked to send comments directly to ESC
- b) DC/20/0168/DRC – Discharge of Condition 3 on Planning Permission DC/19/2329/LBC – Single storey rear extension and various internal alterations to existing dwelling – Willow Farmhouse, East Lane, Ufford. Councillors made the following comments:
- Application is giving details of the windows and doors
 - **Conclusion: No objection** - The Clerk was asked to send comments directly to ESC

Action: Clerk

5. To acknowledge previous months list of SCDC Planning decisions and to discuss any other planning matters to include:

The details of the Planning decisions made during December 2019, which affect properties in Ufford, had been previously circulated (full list available from Clerk). The following additional items were discussed:

- a) Update on progress of DC/19/4871/CLE – There has been a good result from publicising this application and the Planning Portal shows 67 comments including one from Dr Coffey – local MP; 120 names on the petition; disclosable advice was placed on the portal, it was based on legal precedent but also quoted the opening sentence of the permission which referred to the Application and supporting plans and documents where “tourism” and “holiday” are used; the glaring admission is from ESC when they omitted the conditions relating to usage on the permission of the original application, furthermore, SCC Highways did not assess the original application sufficiently; we are still waiting to hear if it was confirmed that the original application had been started within timescale.
- b) To discuss any possible village crowd funding for legal advice – If the application is not refused, should the PC seek a judicial review to have the original application quashed? This would take a huge amount of money running in to thousands of pounds. Perhaps a lot more can be done to hold ESC Officers to account via the local press, as a number of errors have been made by them. It would seem that ESC cannot remove the permission without saying it has lapsed.

The Clerk was asked to write to Philip Ridley to request confirmation that the original application was or was not started within the 3 year timescale and to request details of any reply sent to the applicants of application DC/19/2694/DRC following their letter to himself and a planning officer at ESC, posted on the Planning Portal on 14th Oct 2019. The Clerk was also asked to write to Cllr. Nicoll (enclosing any appropriate plans and title deeds held) asking if the applicants had either purchased the land outside Entrance B (owned by SCC) or had requested a permanent right of access over it.

With reference to the subject of 'Crowd Funding' for funds to support any legal action, it was agreed the Parish Council should wait for the outcome of the current application before any further steps were taken. If permission was granted then the Council would look again at options.

- c) To discuss response from ESC Planning Dept. with reference to our letter of complaint – A reply to our letter had been received from Ms Beighton of ESC. She had commented that our letter related to a type of application that the Parish Council should not have been consulted on (a DRC). Having checked the Planning Portal this had been confirmed and it was agreed that the letter of complaint could be taken no further.

However, it was also agreed that the Clerk should continue to notify Councillors of all applications affecting any property in Ufford and that, when appropriate, the Council should comment.

Action: Clerk

6. To agree Minutes of meetings dated 17th December 2019 and 7th January 2020:

The minutes of the Full Council meeting dated 17th December 2019 and 7th January 2020 had been circulated. The minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr. Bennett, seconded by Cllr. Crocker and all Councillors were in agreement that they be signed.

Action: Clerk

7. To re-approve the minutes of the meeting dated 19th November 2019:

The Chair had noticed that the minutes of the meeting dated 19th November 2019 had been seconded by Cllr. Mayhew, who hadn't attended the meeting. Another seconded of the minutes was requested and Cllr. Hawthorne was pleased to do this.

8. Church:

- a) To discuss the legalities of granting financial assistance for any religious order – The Clerk had previously sent out an e-mail on this subject and a Topic Note from NALC. Basically, the legislation that established Parish Councils in 1894 had specifically excluded them from powers relating to church and ecclesiastical property, this includes management of that property. In the opinion of the Clerk, NALC were suggesting that, save for two specific pieces of legislation relating to contributions to other parishes providing burial provision and the upkeep of closed churchyards, Parish Councils were not permitted to provide financial assistance to churches or other religious bodies.

Councillors debated the lack of case law and the fact that the burial ground, by the Church in Ufford, has only a few spaces left and is nearly a 'closed' churchyard (UPC has made a grant towards the cost of grass cutting). In conclusion, the Clerk was asked to make Councillors aware of the Topic Note in early November 2020, before the 2021 Grant Applications were discussed.

- b) To discuss previous request from St Mary's Church Wardens for the Parish Council to consider providing a new Cemetery – The Clerk confirmed that the onus would be on the District Council to provide burial space, if the cemetery was full and no other suitable sites could be found. The Clerk was asked to write to Rev'd Hamblin and give details of the sites the Parish Council had explored.

Action: Clerk

9. Review of Parish Plan and Parish Review – To discuss document sent out by Clerk on 15th January 2020:

This item was deferred to the March meeting when more Councillors would be present.

10. Highways and Footpaths

- a) To discuss response from Suffolk Constabulary following request for Speed Checks along High Street and the possibility of establishing a Community Speedwatch Scheme – Councillors accepted the text of a recent e-mail from Suffolk Police that explained why their resources no longer allowed them to carry out regular speed checks in villages. The Clerk then explained process for a parish having a Community Speedwatch Group. After discussion it was decided the critical factor in setting up a group was having a dedicated team to organise the sessions. The Clerk was asked to place an article in the March PUNCH to ask for volunteers.

Action: Clerk

11. Recreation Ground and Parklands Woods:

- a) To receive an update on the slalom gates at entrance to Parklands Wood – Cllr. Findley was thanked for his update on the paths in Parklands Wood.
- b) To receive an update on the proposed Ground Rent rises payable by the Ufford Tennis Club, Ufford Football Club and Ufford Community Hall and to discuss suggested alternative proposal from the Ufford Community Hall Committee – The Clerk confirmed that both the Tennis and Football Clubs had not queried the rise in the Ground Rent from 1st April 2020. However, the Community Hall had suggested that their figure should be rounded down to £790 a year, with the possibility of them paying 6 years in advance. After discussion Cllr. Jones proposed the Ground Rent for the Community Hall was set at £790 per year and that their offer to pay 6 years in advance was taken up (with the acknowledgement that there would be no review in 2023). This was seconded by Cllr. O'Malley and all Councillors were in agreement.
- c) To discuss mole treatment around the Play Park – The Clerk read details of two quotations she had received for eradicating the moles at the Play Park and that she was awaiting a third. It was agreed that details of all quotes received would be circulated via e-mail and Councillors asked to vote on their preferred option.

Action: Clerk

12. Finance Matters:a) To receive accounts for December 2019 and inspect the Bank Statements:

The Accounts to 31st December had been sent to all and there were no questions. Cllr. Hawthorne agreed to examine the Bank Statement.

b) To review the Internal Financial Controls and Efficiency of our Internal Audit:

The Chair read details of the internal controls undertaken by the Council in relation to all matters financial and comments made by the Clerk regarding the efficiency of the present internal auditor, Mr Brown. It was unanimously agreed that no changes were required.

c) To receive update on the SCC SID and to authorise purchase of a new battery – £215.00 (+ VAT):

The Clerk reported that a resident had looked at the SCC SID and had deduced that the issue probably lay with a faulty battery in the unit. He had enquired of the manufacturer and a replacement unit would be £215 + VAT (including carriage). The purchase of a new battery was proposed by Cllr. Pearce, seconded by Cllr. Bennett and all Councillors were in agreement. It was decided not to request a grant from Cllr. Nicoll for this expenditure as it may not resolve the issue.

With reference to the comments from Cllrs Nicoll and Poulter regarding their budgets, Council asked the Clerk to request funds for a new Speed Indicator Device for the village.

d) To authorise the following Invoices for Payment:

i.	J Hallett (Salary + Office & mileage expenses)	£657.48
ii.	SCC Pension Fund (Clerk's pension)	£213.89
iii.	SC Norse Ltd (Grass Cutting for 2019)	£458.40
iv.	Thurlow Nunn Standen Ltd (Padlock for Resource Locker)	£15.19
v.	Chris Chesterfield (Maintenance)	£79.91

The above payments were proposed by Cllr. Jones, seconded by Cllr. Mayhew and all Councillors were in agreement that they be paid. The cheques were signed by Cllrs Hawthorne and Edworthy.

e) To note Payments made since last meeting:

- i. None

f) To note Payments received since last meeting:

- i. None

Action: Clerk

13. To receive reports on meetings attended on behalf of the Council and to discuss:

- ESC Budget Meeting – The Clerk gave details of a recent meeting she had attended regarding the budget for ESC for next year. The papers had been circulated.

Chair's initials.....

14. To receive agenda items for the next meeting and agree date of the Next Meeting:

- Conference on 'Verge of success' – *item to be clarified with Cllr. Hawthorne*

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as **18th February 2020** at The Community Hall, The Avenue, Ufford.

Action: Clerk

The meeting was closed at 9.01pm

Signed:

Chair: Cllr. Kathryn M Jones

Date:

Judi Hallett

Clerk to Ufford Parish Council

Chair's initials.....