

Minutes of Ufford Parish Council Annual Meeting

Held on 19th May 2020 ~ 9.00am

Via Zoom Video Conference

Present

Cllr. Kathryn Jones (Chair *after item 1*)

Cllr. Nick Crocker

Cllr. Pat Edworthy

Cllr. David Findley

Cllr. Jane Hawthorne

Cllr. Stephen Mayhew

Cllr. Ashley O'Malley

Cllr. David Pearce

Cllr. John Skinner (from 9.34am)

Judi Hallett (Clerk)

Cnty. Cllr. Alexander Nicoll

1 member of the public was present

1. To elect the Chair of the Council for 2020/21 and signing of the 'Declaration of Acceptance of Office'

Cllr. Jones stepped down as Chair. The Clerk asked for nominations for the position of Chair and Cllr. Hawthorne proposed Cllr. Jones. This was seconded by Cllr. Crocker and Cllr. Jones indicated that she would be prepared to serve another year, if elected. The Clerk asked for any other nominations and there were none. Councillors voted 'all in favour' of Cllr. Jones serving a further year as Chair and the Clerk handed the meeting over.

The Clerk agreed to take the 'Declaration of Acceptance of Office' to Cllr. Jones in the next few days.

Action: Clerk

2. To receive Apologies for absence:

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr. Guy Foscett (at work) and Cllr. Keith Bennett (unwell). These were noted. Cllr. Skinner had indicated he would be joining later in the meeting.

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

There were no declarations of interest or applications for dispensation.

4. Public Session:

a) Reports or comment from any member of the public (notes only):

- None

Chair's initials.....

b) Reports or comment from SCD and SCC Councillors:

- **Dist. Cllr. Carol Poulter** –Cllr. Poulter’s report had been circulated
- **Cnty. Cllr. Alexander Nicoll** – Cllr. Nicoll praised the Council for continuing with meetings and gave an update on Covid-19 actions the County Council were taking, Sizewell C, a renewed relationship with ESC Planning Department with reference to vehicle movements from and to Bentwaters Park (including a newly established relationship with the park transport manager) and air quality issues. He also spoke about the planning application in Melton for the Care Village and indicated that he would probably be writing a letter of objection, as he felt that although this type of care was required, this was the wrong location. He would also like to see PC’s response when it was ready. Cllr. Nicholl was thanked for his attendance.

5. To elect the Vice- Chair of the Council for 2020/21 and signing of the ‘Declaration of Acceptance of Office’

Cllr. Bennett had previously indicated his willingness to stand as Vice-Chair, if nominated. Cllr. Jones proposed and Cllr. Pearce seconded this appointment. There were no further nominations and Councillors voted ‘all in favour’.

The Clerk agreed to take the ‘Declaration of Acceptance of Office’ to Cllr. Bennett in the next few days.

Action: Clerk

6. To appoint persons to the following offices:

Position	Person Nominated
a) Responsible Finance Officer	Clerk
b) Tree Warden	Mr Rob Flory
c) Footpaths Warden	Cllr. David Findley
d) SALC Representative (+ meetings)	Cllr. Steve Mayhew
e) Police Liaison (+ meetings)	Cllr. David Findley
f) Internal Auditor	Mr Trevor Brown
g) Maintenance Man	Covered by a Team of Contractors
h) Ufford Community Hall rep.	Cllr. John Skinner
i) Friends of Parklands Wood rep.	Cllr. Jane Hawthorne

Councillors and members of the public were thanked for taking on these roles. Cllr. Jones proposed the nominations be appointed. This was seconded by Cllr. Edworthy and all Councillors were in agreement.

Action: Clerk

Chair’s initials.....

7. To receive any Changes to Member's interests and to remind Councillors to review their entry on the ESC Register of Interests Website:

The Clerk reminded all Councillors that it was their responsibility to check their entry on the ESC Register of Interests and agreed to send them the link to the register.

Action: Clerk

8. To confirm all Standing orders and Direct Debits presently set up for the Council:

The Clerk confirmed that there was presently one Standing Order established on the Council's Bank Account: Information Commissioners Office for £35 per annum.

Cllr. Jones proposed that this continue. This was seconded by Cllr. Edworthy and all Councillors were in agreement.

9. To ratify decisions taken by the Council after the February 2020 Meeting (due to Government restrictions on gatherings) – see list in Appendix 1:

Decisions taken by Councillors in March and April 2020 (during the start of the Covid-19 Pandemic) were recorded in an appendix to the Agenda (also shown as an appendix to these minutes). Ratification of these decisions was proposed by Cllr. Hawthorne, seconded by Cllr. Crocker and all Councillors were in agreement.

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

- a) DC/20/1521/FUL - Care Village comprising an 80 bedroom care home together with 75 assisted care bungalows, cafe/club house, bowling green, car parking, open space provision with associated infrastructure and access - Land Off Yarmouth Road, Melton. Councillors made the following comments:
 - Cllr. Jones clarified that a draft letter had been produced and sent for comment. This was based on comments received from Councillors, the ESC decision notice for an application made in 2016 for this site containing many similarities, and UPC's reasons for objection to the 2016 proposal. However, this was in no way a barrier to Councillors putting forward comments in support of the current application. There were no comments of support voiced.
 - In addition to the draft letter it was suggested the following points might be added:
 - This is prime agricultural land and is being used as such at present
 - Current GP surgeries are already overwhelmed (as detailed in a letter from a local GP) and they would not be able to cope with such an increase in demand
 - The current Covid-19 Pandemic illustrates how unsuitable it is to have elderly people living in such close quarters. The lack of a mix of ages would also result in an unhealthy community where there would be very little neighbourly support.
 - Promised 'Community Assets' would not be suitable for neighbouring villagers to use and were only a marketing ploy.

- However, it was also noted that the plans were not clear on the actual design of the dwellings and that they might be a more modern design that made them suitable for the elderly and did not put them at a high risk when an epidemic broke out.
- In addition it was felt there may be a need for such facilities but the location was totally wrong and residents would need to be mobile to travel to facilities
- **Conclusion: Objection** (Proposed by Cllr. Findley seconded by Cllr. Jones and with all Councillors in agreement) - The Clerk was asked to re-draft the letter and send around for comments, with a view to the final letter being sent to ESC on Friday 22nd May. The Clerk was also asked to circulate a copy of the Council's final letter on the PUNCHLine.

Cllr. Skinner joined the meeting

- b) DC/20/1642/VOC - Variation of Condition No. 5 of Outline Planning Permission C/00/1243 ...Seeking to remove condition 5 (Permitted Development Rights) in relation to 'Shepherds Cottage' only. - Shepherds Cottage, Byng Hall Road, Ufford.

Councillors made the following comments:

- Pre-application advice had indicated that a Variation of Condition may be a more economic process for achieving permission to convert the garage in to a play room, than a traditional application.
- No neighbours comments have been recorded on the portal and we have no grounds for objection
- **Conclusion: No objection** - The Clerk was asked to send comments directly to ESC

Action: Clerk

11. To acknowledge previous months list of SCD C Planning decisions and to discuss any other planning matters or reports:

The planning decisions taken by ESC in March and April had been circulated and it was acknowledged that a number of older applications had now been concluded.

12. Finance Matters:

- a) To receive and agree End of Year Accounts to 31st March 2020:

The Clerk was thanked for producing the Accounts so quickly after the 31st March and congratulated on the presentation of them. Cllr. Edworthy proposed that they be adopted. This was seconded by Cllr. O'Malley and all Councillors were in agreement.

- b) To receive and accept Internal Auditor's Report for 2019/20 and Section 3 of Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20:

Both these documents had been sent to Councillors prior to the meeting. Cllr. Skinner proposed they were accepted. This was seconded by Cllr. Findley and all Councillors were in agreement. Cllr. Jones referred to the comments from the Internal Auditor as to the Clerk's work in producing the Accounts.

- c) To agree and complete Section 1 of Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2019/20:

The Clerk read each point of Section 1 of Part 3 of the AGAR, in turn. Cllr. Hawthorne proposed that the Council answer in the affirmative to each point. This was seconded by Cllr. O'Malley and all Councillors were in agreement.

- d) To agree and complete Section 2 of Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20:

This section had previously been sent to Councillors. Cllr. Edworthy proposed that the figures were correct and should be reported in the AGAR. This was seconded by Cllr. Crocker and all Councillors were in agreement.

The Clerk agreed to take all relevant papers to the Chair for signing, to publish on the website and to send a link to all documentation to PKF Littlejohn as per the instructions.

- e) To formally receive the PKF Littlejohn report for 2018/19 – sent to Councillors on 24th July 2019:

The Clerk explained that although the 2018/19 report from PKF Littlejohn had been sent to Councillors and published on the website, she had omitted to minute this. Cllr. Jones proposed the report be formally received. This was seconded by Cllr. Findley and all Councillors were in agreement.

- f) To receive accounts for April 2020 and inspect the Bank Statements:

The Accounts to 30th April 2020 had been sent to all and there were no questions. Cllr. Skinner agreed to examine the Bank Statement when the invoices were paid.

- g) To authorise the following Invoices for Payment:

• J Hallett (Salary + Office & mileage expenses)	£634.17
• SCC Pension Fund (Clerk's pension)	£165.50
• Suffolk Treescape (Woodlands Survey and Mapping)	£1,737.60
• J Hawthorne (Ink for Woodlands Report Printing)	£31.67
• Suffolk Digital (Redesigning and Printing of Footpaths Leaflets)	£98.00

The above payments were proposed by Cllr. Jones seconded by Cllr. Edworthy and all Councillors were in agreement that they be paid. The Clerk agreed to take the cheques to Cllrs. Edworthy and Skinner for signing.

- h) To note Payments made since last meeting:

i. See appendix 1

i) To note Payments received since last meeting:

- | | |
|-------------------|------------|
| • ESC Grant (SID) | £1,000.00 |
| • VAT Refund | £429.43 |
| • Precept (50%) | £10,233.00 |

Action: Clerk

13. Documentation – To agree and adopt or acknowledge review of the following:

- a) Asset Register (April 2020)

Cllr. Skinner proposed the above document be adopted. This was seconded by Cllr. O'Malley and all Councillors were in agreement. The Clerk agreed to take a hard copy to Cllr. Jones for signature.

Action: Clerk

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

- Clerk's Annual Review – Cllr. Jones and Cllr. Bennett had carried out the Clerk's Annual Review and a brief report of this had been circulated (See Appendix 2)
- SALC Forum – Cllr. Mayhew reported that he had attended the SALC Forum, just before the Covid-19 lockdown. Many Councils were now using a projector to show plans where an application was less than straight forward. The Clerk reported that UPC owned both a projector and screen and that she could set these up as and when needed. In addition, plans could be shared on screen during a remote meeting.
- SALC Clerk's Networking – The Clerk reported that she had attended a SALC Networking event via Zoom video conferencing and that these were to be held once a month during the Covid-19 pandemic.

15. To receive agenda items for the next meeting and to discuss next meeting:

- Items postponed from this and previous meetings

Councillors felt the first remote meeting had gone very well and that the Council should continue with meeting in this way for the foreseeable future. The date of the next meeting was confirmed as **16th June 2020 at 7.00pm**, via Zoom Video Conferencing.

Action: Clerk

The meeting was closed at 10.12am

Signed:.....

Date:

Chair: Dr. Kathryn M Jones

Judi Hallett
Clerk to Ufford Parish Council

Chair's initials.....

Appendix 1 – Decisions taken outside of a Full Council Meeting, due to restrictions imposed by Government

1. Planning Application DC/20/1019/TCA - Small 'Pine' (Norwegian Spruce) Tree, Marked No. 1 on plan Sketch, Applying for permission to fell this tree [cont.] at Park Farm House, Lower Road, Ufford – **Decision: No Objection.**

2. Minutes of meeting dated 18th February 2020 – **Decision: Accepted as Correct**

3. Purchase of a new Laptop with appropriate software and anti-virus – Decision: Purchase agreed with MS Office Software Home and Office purchased outright and AVG Ant-Virus

4. Payment of Invoices:

• J Hallett (Salary + Office & mileage expenses)	£552.27
• SCC Pension Fund (Clerk's pension)	£171.11
• HMRC Cumbernauld (Clerk's PAYE)	£97.80
• Glasdon UK Limited (Dog Bin)	£129.08
• SALC (GDPR Training for Clerk – 1/3 cost)	£18.00
• SC Norse (Dog Bin Emptying)	£14.40

Decision: All agreed

5. Risk Assessments – Financial (March 2020) and Non-Financial (March 2020) – **Decision: Both Agreed.**

6. Payment of Invoices (1st April 2020):

• SALC (6 months payroll service)	£54.00
• Suffolk Cloud (Web Site provision)	£110.00
• Suffolk County Council (Street Lighting)	£949.57
• J Hallett (New PC Laptop)	£903.60
• Ufford PUNCH (2020 Grant)	£700.00
• St Mary's Church Flowers (2020 Grant)	£250.00
• Ufford Players (2020 Grant)	£99.96
• St Mary's Ufford PCC (2020 Grant)	£900.00

Decision: All agreed

7. Payment of Invoices (16th April 2020):

• J Hallett (Salary and Expenses)	£671.08
• SCC Pension Fund (Clerk's Pension)	£206.87
• SALC (Annual Subscription)	£353.43
• T Brown (Internal Audit)	£150.00

Decision: All agreed

8. Purchase of Chainsaw with Lottery Grant (16th April 2020) – **Decision: Agreed.**

Appendix 2 - Report for UPC of Clerk's Annual Review 14 May 2020

Cllr Kathryn Jones and Cllr Keith Bennett held a meeting with Judi Hallett, Parish Clerk, via Zoom video conference on 14 May 2020.

We congratulated Judi on another year (now 6 yrs. in post) of excellent work. We passed on many complimentary comments made by other Councillors.

Judi expressed her enjoyment in working with Ufford Parish Council. We discussed all aspects of her role and duties, and her hours worked, salary and expenses paid. The annual cost of living award has not yet been agreed, as we follow the recommended pay scales.

One action point was identified, highlighted during the Covid-19 pandemic, and this is for UPC to consider setting up full online banking, and remove the need for drawing cheques. Other PCs have found secure ways of doing this.

I suggest that this should be a future Agenda item, and that I shall ask Judi to prepare a paper for distribution prior to that to outline the way that this can be achieved.

Judi was thanked for all her work, and she in turn reiterated her thanks to UPC, and particularly for her membership of the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Kathryn Jones
Chair UPC