

Minutes of Ufford Parish Council Meeting

Held on 21st July 2020 ~ 7.00pm

Via Zoom Video Conference

Present

Cllr. Kathryn Jones (Chair)
Cllr. Pat Edworthy
Cllr. Jane Hawthorne
Cllr. David Pearce

Cllr. Keith Bennett
Cllr. David Findley
Cllr. Stephen Mayhew
Cllr. John Skinner

Cllr. Nick Crocker
Cllr. Guy Foscett
Cllr. Ashley O'Malley

Judi Hallett (Clerk)

Cnty. Cllr. Alexander Nicoll

Dist. Cllr. Carol Poulter

3 members of the public were present

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and clarified protocol and procedure during the meeting.

1. To receive Apologies for absence:

There were no apologies for absence.

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

There were none.

3. Public Session:

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

- Member of the public one - with reference to DC/20/1877/FUL:
 - My letter of objection for this development has been sent to ESC and passed to all UPC Councillors (reasons for objecting were listed)
 - The work is certainly not in keeping with the Conservation Area and I can't see how anyone can say it is
 - [Chair confirmed planning process to all]
- Member of the public two - with reference to DC/20/1877/FUL:
 - My letter of support to this development has been sent to ESC and passed to all UPC Councillors
 - The applicant was originally told he did not require planning permission
 - My reasons for support are set out in my letter and this work does not affect the 300 year old properties. The nature of the banks in East Lane means that sand is often washed into the road, causing a hazard to road users
 - Similar use of wood, e.g. railway sleepers, can be seen further along East Lane and in Ufford Place.

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- The work will be much softer when planting matures
- Member of the public three - with reference to DC/20/1877/FUL:
 - Mr Spencer renovated both his property and the adjoining cottage, and another house in the village; all to a very good standard
 - The work is in keeping with the area and has cured the issues; it will look much better over time when planting matures.

b) Reports or comment from ESC and SCC Councillors:

- **Dist. Cllr. Carol Poulter** – Cllr. Poulter’s report has been circulated and she expanded on the following points: Covid-19 Pandemic and the need to remain vigilant; ESC support for residents through the loaning of electronic equipment to aid communications and grants for businesses and individuals. Cllr. Poulter congratulated UPC on meeting so efficiently and effectively during the pandemic. *There were no questions for Cllr. Poulter.*
- **Cnty. Cllr. Alexander Nicoll** – Cllr. Nicoll commented on the following items: ESC Planning process and lack of member influence over decisions; Sizewell C DCO and the hope that many Parish Councils will attend the forthcoming meeting organised by SCC and ESC on 29th July and volumes of HGV traffic generated by Bentwaters Park – a meeting would be arranged shortly. *There were no questions for Cllr. Nicoll.*

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

- a) DC/20/1877/FUL - Bank retaining structure in front garden. Installation of a new shed within the perimeters of the existing garden - 2 Meadowside, East Lane, Ufford. Councillors made the following comments:
- A very difficult situation with opposing neighbours’ views. The fact that the application is retrospective should not affect our assessment of it but we perhaps should comment about this separately.
 - Four letters of objection and one letter of support have so far been lodged with ESC.
 - Our comments need to be based on Planning Considerations and not our opinion on aesthetics within the garden

Cllr. Findley left the meeting at 7.30pm for personal reasons

- It was an ‘eyesore’ before and definitely needed something doing; I think the look is ‘stark’ at present but with sympathetic planting it should look much better and softer.
- Agreement with the above comment, not my choice of aesthetics but it is much more tidy and planting will improve it
- Concern that putting the land back to how it was originally would now be impossible and therefore I am angered that this is a retrospective application

- **Conclusion: No Objection** (Proposed by Cllr. Jones, seconded by Cllr. Skinner and with all Councillors in agreement) - The Clerk was asked to include in the letter a request for a condition to require that an evergreen planting scheme is drawn up and to comment that the Parish Council regrets that the applicant continued with the project after he was informed of the requirement to obtain planning permission; it would have been more appropriate to stop and wait for the permission to be granted before continuing work that could not be reversed.

Action: Clerk

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

The planning decisions taken by ESC in June had been circulated and was available from the Clerk.

Comment was made with reference to the latest application at 'The Walk' in Lower Road (DC/20/1768/FUL), which had been approved by ESC.

6. To sign Minutes of meeting dated 16th June 2020:

The minutes of the Full Council meeting dated 16th June 2020 had been circulated. The minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr. Pearce, seconded by Cllr. Hawthorne and all Councillors were in agreement that they be signed.

The Clerk agreed to publish the minutes on the website.

Action: Clerk

7. Clerk's Update on Previous Minutes and Actions:

a) Suffolk Coastal Local Plan Consultation on Main Modifications – Confirmation had been received from ESC that our letter had been received and would be taken in to consideration.

b) PA System in the Church Hall – The Clerk confirmed that The St Mary's PCC were considering the matter of having the PA system transferred to them.

c) Development in Rendlesham Village Centre – The Clerk reported that the ESC Planning Committee had approved a plan to build 4 commercial units and 11 affordable houses on the site of the former sports centre in Rendlesham. This had been contrary to the wishes of Rendlesham PC and they had also claimed it was contrary to their Neighbourhood Plan.

8. To discuss residents request to purchase land at the rear of 3 Nicholls Close:

A request had been received from the residents of 3 Nicholls Close, firstly enquiring as to the ownership of a small parcel of land at the rear of their property and then to purchase it, in order to enlarge their garden.

The Clerk had confirmed that the land in question belonged to Ufford PC and she had spoken to Mr James Hall of Birketts Solicitors regarding the transfer documentation completed in 2014, which seemed to indicate some restrictive covenants that would have to be overcome if the land were to be sold for use as a private garden. Councillors asked if the land could be 'leased' to the residents (as was the case for a separate parcel of land behind another property) but the Clerk confirmed the restrictive covenants would still need to be lifted.

Mr Hall had also indicated, in a non-chargeable e-mail, that ESC would need to be involved if any of the restrictive covenants were to be lifted and would be likely to ask for financial compensation and all costs to be paid. It was also agreed that, should any sale go ahead, there would be no expense incurred by UPC and that the purchaser would be liable to pay all costs, fees and for the time spent on the project by the Clerk.

The Clerk was asked to advise the residents of 3 Nicholls Close of the situation and ask them to confirm they would be willing to pay all costs (both of ESC and UPC) before any further action was taken. It was also suggested that a maximum of two thirds of the available land be sold, to allow for a small grass verge between any fence and the path.

Action: Clerk

9. To discuss vacancies at the Community Hall Charity and position of UPC Representative:

Cllr. Skinner explained that Mrs Chris Cage had decided to retire in her role of caretaker, treasurer and booking secretary at the Community Hall. Despite adverts in the PUNCH and on PUNCHLine, only the position of caretaker had been filled.

Cllr. Skinner further explained that very little work needed to be done by the other committee members of the hall and that there seemed to be reluctance in some residents' minds to treat the hall as a true community asset for all. He had spoken to other village hall secretaries and many of them paid their officers and used online tools to make processes easier.

The Clerk explained that she had volunteered to take over as Booking Secretary, but only from July 2021, when other projects she was working on would be concluded. It was agreed that Cllrs. Skinner and Jones would meet along with the Clerk to discuss the matter outside of the meeting.

Action: Cllrs. Skinner and Jones and Clerk

10. To discuss providing a 'Welcome Pack' for new residents:

Councillors discussed the paper from Cllr. Findley and a further suggestion from the Clerk for a 'Postcard' style communication with details to all useful information on one webpage. As Cllr. Findley had had to leave the meeting early it was decided to postpone discussions until the August meeting.

Action: Clerk

11. Highways/Footpaths:

- a) To acknowledge latest report from Footpaths Volunteer Working Party – Cllr. Findley was thanked for the excellent report and the other members of the working group were thanked for the work they carry out.
- b) To discuss Ufford Footpaths Signage Project and agree expenditure and application for a grant – The Chair congratulated Cllrs Findley and Bennett on an excellent discussion paper and proposal and for all the background work that had been carried out. The subject of wording for the signs was discussed and it was agreed that placing 'mi' after the figure indicating the length of a path, would be preferable. Cllr. Jones proposed the complete proposal was authorised. This was seconded by Cllr. Edworthy and all Councillors were in agreement. The Clerk was asked to request a grant for the project from Cllr. Nicoll.
- c) To discuss options for purchase of a SID (six quotations provided by Clerk) and decide on required model – After discussion it was agreed to purchase the 'SIDSigns.co.uk' landscape model, battery powered with solar assisted charging, at a total price of £2,020.00
- d) To receive an update on placing a Dog Bin at the junction of School Lane and The Avenue and further request for one at the Ufford Place Gates – After discussion it was agreed to take the following action:
 - Purchase and arrange installation of a green Dog Bin at the Ufford Place Gates (next to the Grit Bin)
 - Enquire as to placing a further bin next to the Grit Bin in The Avenue, opposite the junction with School Lane, following discussion with neighbours who were not keen to have a dog bin outside their property in School Lane, at the first proposed site.
- e) Sogenhoe Chapel – To discuss maintenance of the grass and hedges – The Clerk explained that both a private contractor and the Woodland Group had tidied the land and the entrance in past years. Cllr. Foskett confirmed that the grass beside the road would be cut after the harvest but that this was only done once a year. Cllr. Hawthorne reported that a local historian was looking to renew the information board at the site and it was agreed to ask Cllr. Findley to assess the situation to see if the Footpaths Working Group had any tools that could help or consider contracting a maintenance man to cut the grass

Action: Cllr. Findley, Cllr. Bennett and The Clerk

12. Recreation Ground and Parklands Woods:

- a) To receive update on Lottery Application Funds – A report on the progress of the Five Lottery Projects had been circulated by Cllr. Hawthorne.

13. Finance Matters:

- a) To receive accounts for June 2020 and inspect the Bank Statements:

The Accounts to 30th June 2020 had been sent to all. Cllr. Mayhew asked about the reserves table within the Budget Sheet and the Clerk agreed to check this after the meeting. Cllr. Hawthorne agreed to examine the Bank Statement when the invoices were paid.

- b) To discuss moving to online banking for all payments:

The Clerk explained that all other financial institutions she had explored, required the person who set up the payments to be the 'first authoriser'. However, it was further explained that with Lloyds, two further authorisers could be required; therefore retaining the need for 2 Councillors to authorise the payments. Cllr. Pearce proposed the Council move over to full online banking. This was seconded by Cllr. Jones and all Councillors were in agreement.

- c) To authorise the following Invoices for Payment:

• J Hallett (Salary + Office & mileage expenses)	£695.27
• SCC Pension Fund (Clerk's pension)	£206.87

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 Hawthorne for signing.

- d) To note Payments made since last meeting:

i. None

- e) To note Payments received since last meeting:

i. None

Action: Clerk

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

The following meetings had been attended:

- Clerk's Networking – A full report had been produced by the Clerk and circulated
- Police/ESC Liaison - A full report had been produced by Cllr. Findley and circulated

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

- a) Standing Orders (July 2020)
- b) Financial Regulations (July 2020))

Cllr. Skinner proposed the above documents be adopted. This was seconded by Cllr. Bennett and all Councillors were in agreement. The Clerk agreed to take hard copies to Cllr. Jones for signature.

Action: Clerk

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

- Items postponed from this meeting
- Continuation of meetings via Zoom

A clarification regarding possible removal of trees covered by the Area TPO in Ufford Place was sought and the Clerk agreed to forward the ESC response to all.

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as **18th August 2020 at 7.00pm**, via Zoom Video Conferencing.

Action: Clerk

The meeting was closed at 8:40pm

Signed:.....

Date:

Chair: Dr. Kathryn M Jones

Judi Hallett
Clerk to Ufford Parish Council

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