

## Minutes of Ufford Parish Council Meeting

Held on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2020 ~ 7.00pm

Via Zoom Video Conference

### Present

Cllr. Kathryn Jones (Chair)  
Cllr. Guy Foskett  
Cllr. David Pearce

Cllr. Pat Edworthy  
Cllr. Stephen Mayhew  
Cllr. John Skinner

Cllr. David Findley  
Cllr. Ashley O'Malley

Judi Hallett (Clerk)

One member of the public

### **1. To receive Apologies for absence:**

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr. Keith Bennett (Family engagement), Cllr. Jane Hawthorne (previous engagement), Cllr. Nick Crocker (previous engagement), Dist. Cllr. Carol Poulter and Cnty. Cllr. Alexander Nicoll. These were noted.

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

Cllr. Findley declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 4. c) and asked for dispensation to make a statement during the public session. This was agreed.

### **3. Public Session:**

*The Chair explained, to those present, the process by which members of the public can raise issues or make comment to the Councillors.*

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

- DC/20/4812/TCA – The Ufford Tree Warden had sent in comments about this application and further reiterated these, saying that the trees in question were of little value and required pruning to make the area safe.
- DC/20/4945/TCA – Cllr. Findley (in his capacity as a member of the public) stated that both he and his neighbours had spoken with the applicant and it had been agreed, to everyone's satisfaction, to what extent work would be carried out on the trees and hedging. It was commented that, on some occasions, cutting back hedging more severely than initially wanted can result in more even and thicker regeneration.

#### **b) Reports or comment from ESC and SCC Councillors:**

- **Cnty. Cllr. Alexander Nicoll** – Cllr. Nicoll had sent his apologies.
- **Dist. Cllr. Carol Poulter** – Cllr. Poulter had sent her apologies.

---

*Chair's initials.....*

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

- a) DC/20/4812/TCA - Cut back three large tree limbs that are overhanging the site kiosk and equipment - Anglian Water Ufford, Behind The Lion, Lower Street, Ufford -  
Councillors made the following comments:
- This work seems necessary
  - A straight forward application and no objections
  - **Conclusion: No Objection** (Proposed by Cllr. Findley, seconded by Cllr. Foskett and all Councillors in agreement).
- b) DC/20/4811/FUL - Change of use from C1 Hotel rooms to C3 residential apartments for use as holiday accommodation - Ufford Park Hotel, Yarmouth Road, Melton. The Chair explained that this application had been withdrawn (reason unknown).
- c) DC/20/4945/TCA | 1. Aesculus hippocastanum T1 Dead Tree fell and remove stump. Replant with single std Catalpha biganoides 2. Taxus baccata G1. group of 2, Overgrown remnant of hedge. (due to neglect). reduce to 600mm agl, to regenerate and interplant with young plants at 1 Gardeners Cottages, Lower Road, Ufford.  
Councillors made the following comments:
- *Cllr. Findley did not take part in this discussion*
  - Good to see that discussions have taken place between neighbours
  - Work to the trees should create a better hedge in future and the tree in question is dead.
  - **Conclusion: No Objection** (Proposed by Cllr. Jones, seconded by Cllr. Foskett and all Councillors in agreement).
- d) *Additional Item* – Solar Farm at Parham – The Clerk had distributed details of a proposed large Solar Farm in the Parham area, that developers were currently consulting on. It was suggested that this land was quite high and the panels may have an impact on the surrounding area.

**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 November had been circulated and were available from the Clerk. The Chair further reported that the application in Woods Lane, Melton, for 27 Self-Build dwellings had been refused by ESC, without going to Committee.

- a) Correspondence connected to DC/20/3722/VOC (Variation of Condition 2 of DC/20/1768/FUL ... - The Walk, Lower Road, Ufford) – It was reported that neighbours of the property at The Walk were presently pursuing action in connection with a covenant placed on the property, after the Parish Council had been alerted to the existence of the covenant by another resident.

---

*Chair's initials.....*

- b) To agree letter to EDF with reference to further Sizewell C Consultation – Councillors thanked the Chair for drafting a response to this fifth consultation (and for attending an online meeting with SCC, ESC and Parish and Town Council representatives) and it was agreed it should be sent. Cllr. Mayhew indicated that he had attended a Webinar on the subject but that any gain from this would probably not be useful until further representation was made to the Planning Inspector.

Action: Clerk

**6. To sign Minutes of meeting dated 17th November 2020:**

The minutes of the Full Council meeting dated 17<sup>th</sup> November 2020 had been circulated. The minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr. Skinner, seconded by Cllr. O'Malley and all Councillors were in agreement that they be signed.

The Clerk agreed to publish the minutes on the website.

Action: Clerk

**7. Finance Matters:**

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

The Accounts to 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020 had been sent to all. The Clerk was asked to take the statements to a Councillor for examination. Cllr. Pearce questioned why the paper bank statement was being examined, when four Councillors now had online access to view at any time. It was agreed that amending this practice would be placed on the January agenda.

- b) To receive an update on the amendments to the Bank Mandate:

The Clerk confirmed that the online amendments had been made to amend her access to 'Create Only' and to change the number of signatories to 'two to sign'. A form confirming this had eventually been received and had been signed and sent back to Lloyds.

The Clerk confirmed the Financial Regulations would be amended, once the mandate amendment was confirmed by Lloyds.

- c) To discuss draft budget for 2021/22:

The Clerk displayed the draft budget and explained each line; a number of points were debated and a couple of figures were amended or corrected. Comments from Councillors included:

- The Budget should balance and we should aim to do this. More houses mean we can ask for more money but still show a 'zero change' on the Council Tax bills.
- For the first time in a long while our income is higher than our expected expenditure, and VAT and Grants are not yet included.

- We have upgraded our assets in recent years and now we are in a much stronger position. However we now need to start saving for future expenditure as grants may not be so readily available.
- Our finances show a strong position, even with sensible reserves and we should reduce the Precept, especially following such a difficult year for many residents.
- Our finances are healthy but we shouldn't reduce the Precept, we should increase it in line with inflation and put more aside for future projects (Broadband Project, Neighbourhood Plan, Legal Expenses, Play Park upgrade, etc.)
- Perhaps this is the year to go for a 'Zero Change'; even if it is only for one year.

In conclusion the Clerk was asked to revise the figures to balance the income and expenditure and look at allocating more funds to specific reserves for future projects. The Draft Budget and decision re. Precept will be reviewed at the January UPC meeting for a final decision.

d) To discuss Precept Request for 2021/22:

See above

e) To authorise the following Invoices for Payment:

i. J Hallett (Salary + Office & mileage expenses)	£620.24
ii. SCC Pension Fund (Clerk's pension)	£170.07
iii. HMRC Cumbernauld (Clerk's PAYE)	£56.45
iv. P Hallett (Maintenance)	£30.99
v. SC Norse Ltd (Grass Cutting for 2020)	£472.15

The above payments were proposed by Cllr. Mayhew, seconded by Cllr. Foskett and all Councillors were in agreement that they be paid. The Clerk agreed to set up the payments, send electronic copies of the invoices to the authorisers and request first, second and third authorisations.

f) To note Payments made since last meeting:

- i. None

g) To note Payments received since last meeting:

- i. None

**8. To receive update on the Broadband Project from Cllr. Mayhew:**

Cllr. Mayhew gave a comprehensive update to this project (see Appendix A). Options from both Openreach and County Broadband were discussed and it was agreed, at this stage, to continue to liaise with both companies, although it was felt the offer from Openreach was probably more suitable.

Cllr. Mayhew was thanked for his ongoing work on this project and agreed to set up a Zoom meeting with both companies, in order that their offers could be heard and scrutinised by Ufford residents.

Action: Cllr. Mayhew

**9. Clerk's Update on Previous Minutes and Actions:**

- a) Young Persons Survey – The Clerk confirmed that no further responses had been received to the survey. It was suggested, and agreed, that this project would not be further pursued.
- b) Electric Car Charging Point – Still no response from SCC as yet but a meeting with the installation company was planned for Hollesley Village Hall on Thursday and appropriate questions would be asked.
- c) Cycling and Walking Strategy – An article on the PUNCHLine had generated interest and a number of entries for lanes in Ufford had been posted.
- d) Speed Indicator Device – The repaired device was now back with Mr Barkley and it would be put up at the end of the week. It was commented that the device opposite Spring Lane was not as informative as modern designs and potentially should be replaced. The Clerk agreed to place this on a future agenda.
- e) Second Football Team Using Ufford Recreation Ground – The existing team's Chair had accepted the view of the Parish Council and he would ensure any visiting teams were kept to five per year maximum.

Action: Clerk

**10. Highways/Footpaths:**

- a) To receive update on Gates to the churchyard at NE and SE corners – Cllr. Findley reported that a meeting had taken place between a SC Norse representative, the Clerk and himself. The status of the gates had been discussed and demonstrated and it was agreed some action by Norse was required. Further to this a second site meeting had been carried out by Norse and a report produced. It was acknowledged by Norse that the gates were their responsibility and that any replacement would need to be 'like for like, as the Churchyard was in a Conservation Area.

It was felt that this matter had now been concluded as the St Mary's PCC had details of Norse team and could liaise directly with them in future.

- b) To receive update on the use of QR codes to provide information to walkers – Cllr. Findley reported that the test of the QR code at the Church had been very successful with all but the 'Three' mobile network being successfully tested. He had also found the process of producing the codes very easy (with zero expense) and research in to locations (with a view to this being loaded on to the Website) quick and readily available.

It was decided that this project should continue at a slow pace with codes being added once research was completed and uploaded to the Website, bearing in mind some work was curtailed by the Covid restrictions.

- c) To discuss review of the Heritage Trail – See above

**Action: Cllr. Findley and The Clerk**

#### **11. Recreation Ground and Parklands Woods:**

- a) To receive update on WWII Information Board – Cllr. Hawthorne's full report had been circulated and it was hoped a draft would be ready for review shortly.
- b) To discuss maintenance contract and Inspections of Play Park with Ipswich Borough Council – The Clerk reported that the surface under the swing had again been reported to IBC but no reply had been received. However, it was further reported that the repairs had been carried out. It was decided to continue to use IBC for the maintenance of the Play Park.
- c) To receive update on decorating of trees in Parklands Wood for Christmas – The Clerk reported that preparations were going well and a number of items had already been made or donated. However, she had received a comment from a concerned Ufford resident that the event was not in keeping with current Covid 19 guidelines and that potentially a number of people could all be meeting in the woodlands at the same time.

The Clerk had explained to the gentleman that a one way route had been devised and that marshals would be in place to encourage visitors to keep apart and to follow the designated route. The following comments were made:

- This is very difficult; a lot of work has gone in to this project but at the same time we must ensure the Covid rules are observed
- There must be a one-way system, with hand sanitiser and it should mainly be for children.
- Anyone shielding would be cautious and would ideally not attend
- This is not a UPC event, it is an event we are allowing to take place on our land; that needs to be clear in communications.
- If we go in to Tier 3 it cannot go ahead.

It was concluded that the event would go ahead but that a clear set of guidelines would be sent out on the PUNCHLine and marshals would direct and inform visitors.

Cllr. Edworthy asked if a small fund could be available for additional lights. It was agreed that expenditure of up to £100 could be incurred and could then be reclaimed from the Clerk.

- d) To discuss a Councillor attending the full RoSPA Play Equipment Checking Training – Cllr. O'Malley agreed to attend this training and the Clerk was asked to find out details of the next sessions.
- e) Additional Item – Tennis Court Fence – Cllr. Skinner raised concern that damage was being caused to the Tennis Court Fence by children accessing the court to retrieve balls. It was suggested that perhaps the netting on the MUGA could be extended and it was agreed to place this item on the January agenda.
- f) Additional Item – MUGA Fence - Councillors discussed the options for making further repairs to the MUGA fence and, after debate it was agreed a new strand wire should be put in place and the fence clipped to it.

**Action: Clerk**

**12. Documentation – To receive and adopt the following documentation:**

- a) Ufford Community Hall Licence (January 2021) – The Clerk explained that a number of amendments to this had been made but that she was now satisfied it was fit for purpose. It was agreed that all deleted text should be removed and a final draft be passed to Cllr. Skinner for distribution to the Charity Trustees and Community Hall Committee for review.

It was further suggested that a Trustee, aside from Cllr. Skinner, should sign the final document.

**Action: Clerk**

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

Councillors had attended (and reported on) the following meetings:

- Cllr. Findley – Anti Social Behaviour / Police Liaison Meeting
- Cllr. Jones – Sizewell C Meeting

**14. To agree meeting dates, start times and format for 2021:**

After discussion it was agreed to retain the start time of the meetings at 7.00pm.

It was further agreed to continue to meet on the third Tuesday of each month and to use Zoom for the foreseeable future, with a review at the March meeting.

---

*Chair's initials.....*

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

- Budget and Precept for 2021/22
- Amendment to Finance Regulations re Online Banking
- Broadband Project

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as **19<sup>th</sup> January 2021 at 7.00pm**, via Zoom.

**Action: Clerk**

The meeting was closed at 8.56pm.

Signed:.....

Date: .....

Chair: Dr. Kathryn M Jones

Judi Hallett  
Clerk to Ufford Parish Council

---

*Chair's initials.....*



## Appendix A – Report from Cllr. Mayhew on Broadband Project

### RURAL GIGABYTE CONNECTIVITY PROGRAMME UPDATE 15TH DECEMBER 2020

80 premises have been added to the Openreach portal. Openreach's initial evaluation and offer is as below.

*"Through this co-funded approach, we'll cover all costs for this project that fall within our own commercial threshold. This means that the figures estimated below represent the remaining cost that your community would need to contribute to enable us to deliver an FTTP network.*

*As your community is eligible to benefit from the DCMS Gigabit Voucher Scheme we would like to provide this offer as a 'Demand Led' project. Demand Led projects are based on our Community Fibre Partnership scheme, in that we'll cover the costs for this project that fall within our own commercial threshold and the figure below represents the remaining cost that the community needs to contribute using the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) Gigabit and Rural Gigabit Vouchers.*

*This means that if you wish to proceed to an offer capable of acceptance, your community will not need to contract directly with us but would need to pledge your vouchers to us through our 'Connect my Community' web portal and comply with the terms and conditions of the voucher scheme."*

- Core community – 464 Premises
- Initial Estimate – £325,555
- Cost Per Premise – £701.63

On the face of it this is great news as the £1500 voucher per premise more than covers the cost. Openreach have quoted for 5x the number of properties listed on the portal. They give the reason for this as –

*"Within our network, properties share common Distribution Points (DPs), this could be a pole or a box outside your property. When we design the new fibre network, we will include all properties that share the same distribution point as the addresses you have given us, because they will all naturally benefit from the work. The capital cost doesn't change and adding the properties that share your equipment means that the contribution required by each property becomes smaller"*

The downside is that 'the capital cost doesn't change' so if we only execute 80 properties the cost per property goes up to £4,069. However, properties that are not registered to the scheme can benefit for the scheme so we could potentially add them. It needs to be checked what happens in the case that a property refuses to take the benefit and refuses to have a voucher redeemed against their property and whether we can redeem the voucher against the property without the owner's specific consent. See below.

*"My neighbour does not want anything to do with this, will he benefit from the scheme? It depends on his location. If he shares the same Distribution Point (DP) then he will be included. However, if the DP is not included then he will not benefit."*

The other good news is that all properties in the area have a download speed of less than 100MB/s and are included and Openreach are quoting for supply of up to 1000MB/s (1GB/S)

The next stage of the process would be to set up a call with Openreach to get more into the detail. In theory the next steps would be: -

1. Agree the list of properties and get a firm quote (the cost may be higher than indicative as the ballpark cost provided was computer generated and may not have factored in all of the installation challenges. Most of the routing would be done using existing poles or ducts.

2. Openreach will need to contract with a legal entity. They have defined these as – “The contract must be between a Legal Entity and Openreach rather than a group of individuals. The LE can be a business in the community, a CIC (Community Interest Company), parish council, it can be an individual”

We would need to define what are legal entity for the project. Our choices are either as the Parish Council a Community Interest Company (as a company without shares and limited by guarantee otherwise known as a CLG). We would need legal advice in either case to understand for example the liabilities of the scheme placed on the PC in the event of for example some of the vouchers being declared void or any other circumstance increasing costs of the project above the voucher threshold. If we went down the CIC route, we would need to set up a company with a Memorandum and Articles of Association just like any other company and would to find and appoint directors.

3. I believe that the contract would need to be agreed before we got to the point of redeeming the vouchers. However, a key point is that the vouchers are redeemed before we need to sign the contract so we can pull out before we committed if the vouchers didn't cover all or the majority of the cost of the project. Openreach have stated “The process indicates that only after all vouchers are authorised then the contract will be signed”

4. The contract is signed.

5. Installation begins via poles or ducting to a box, a bit larger than your current Master Socket.

6. Users then contact their ISP (existing or new) to set up the service and new router as with any current broadband change.

#### **Open questions for the PC (1-3) and Openreach (4-6)**

1. Based on the information to date does the PC wish to keep exploring next steps?

2. Do we want to allocate anything in the budget for legal advice?

3. If we need to contact all 464 properties how would we do this?

4. Who authorises the vouchers for Openreach on the ‘Connect my Community’ web portal? Is it each individual household or a councillor in the case of the PC or Director in the event of a CIC?

5. If a householder refuses to be part of the scheme can the voucher still be claimed?

Do we need explicit permission from each household to be part of the scheme at this stage or only at installation and if installation is refused is the voucher invalidated?

6. Are all the properties in the list of 464 valid? (If not costs per household could increase). For example, some barns and annexes at properties have been included. A few of the properties are out of the PC area in Pettistree or Bromeswell – does that matter?

#### **Other Points**

1. The speed provide by the Openreach network will be up to 1GB/s which is more than 10x and up to 40x the current experience in Ufford
2. The London School of Economics and Political Science and the Imperial College Business School have issued a report based on 15 years data suggesting that Doubling your internet speed could add around three per cent to the value of your home.

#### **Further Update**

There is an alternative to signing a contract which is the ‘Demand Led’ option that Openreach are now proposing.

In this scenario Openreach will begin the installation once a certain number of vouchers have been pledged. This is known as the ‘pledge target’ and this is equivalent to the build cost +30% (the 30% is a buffer in case a number of the properties drop out or for any reason their vouchers are invalidated).

In Ufford’s case the build cost estimate is £325,555 (please note the actual cost proposal may go up once the detailed evaluation has been done). The pledge target would therefore be £325,555 + 30% - i.e. £423,222. Based on vouchers at £1500 per property this would require 282 properties to pledge their vouchers before the work starts.

There are some businesses which can pledge a higher value so the number of properties would be a bit less than this based on these costs.