

**Minutes of Ufford Parish Council Meeting**Held on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2021 ~ 7.00pm

Via Zoom Video/Audio 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)  
Nicola Jenner (ESC Communities Officer)

Cnty. Cllr. Alexander Nicoll

Dist. Cllr. Carol Poulter  
No members of the Public

*The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that Nicola Jenner would be joining as soon as she was finished at a previous meeting.*

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

No apologies for absence had been received

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

There were no declarations of interest and therefore, no applications for dispensation.

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

- None

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

- **Dist. Cllr. Carol Poulter** – Cllr. Poulter's report had been circulated and she further commented on the following items:
  - Covid-19 – cases are slowly going down, Suffolk now top of the table for vaccination rollout, lockdown will be easing slightly at the end of March
  - Sizewell C – Working closely with Cllr. Nicoll and trying to ensure the roads are upgraded where necessary
  - Enabling Communities Grant – New form for 2021/22
  - [The Chair thanked Cllr. Poulter for her generosity in confirming she could provide a grant for both the Chat Bench and Rough-Grass Mower]
- **Cnty. Cllr. Alexander Nicoll** – Cllr. Nicoll reported on the following items:
  - Quiet Lanes – Launch of new lane in Snape earlier in the day [photo displayed by Clerk], this was the first of Phase 1 of the 2021 project with over 300 miles of new QL's in 50 different villages to follow.

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*Chair's initials.....*

- Highways Meeting – Attended a recent meeting with SCC Highways, ESC Planning and representatives from villages surrounding and affected by Bentwaters Park, interesting comments from some officers but great to see the parishes working together and all engaged, the issues for each parish are often different but they are interconnected, there was a commitment to ‘work together’ and after the Election Purdah period this would be resumed.
- Sizewell – Final plans were still causing concern
- SCC Elections – Purdah will start on 25<sup>th</sup> March and election will be on 6th May (SCC only)
- [The Chair thanked Cllr. Nicoll for speaking up at the Highways meeting and the Clerk gave an update with reference to Lower Road/Old Church Road (Melton) being approved as a Quiet Lane]
- Q. *Who holds Planning Officers to account?* Snr officers are accountable to the CEO of ESC, and the Leader of ESC. There is no accountability to SCC.

c) Presentation from Nicola Jenner (ESC Communities Officer):

- Nicola was introduced by the Chair and she gave a presentation detailing her role within ESC
- A question was asked between Councillors as to whether the Helping Ufford Group (HUG) was still operating. It was thought it was but with reduced call for support. The assistance given by HUG to villagers during the Covid Pandemic was described, and praised.
- Nicola was thanked for her presentation and her details were to be circulated by the Clerk

Action: Clerk

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

- a) DC/21/0740/FUL - To form a second storey on top of the existing family room and to also extend towards the rear. A second single story extension to be made also from the rear of the property that will link the existing utility room to the house at 6 Spring Lane, Ufford - Councillors made the following comments:
- I am surprised at the quality of these plans, they make assessment of the development very difficult and some crucial elements are missing
  - This is not unusual and ESC do sometimes ask for clearer plans, however, it is they who decide if the plans are of sufficient quality to allow the proposed development to be consulted on
  - The house is presented very well and I have no problem with the plans, there have been no neighbours' comments
  - **Conclusion: No objection**
- b) DC/21/0900/FUL - Double garage at The Den, High Street, Ufford – Councillors made the following comments:
- The existing garage has been demolished already but this is not an issue

- It seems as if only some neighbours have been consulted and not others, what are the rules?
- A double garage often means loss of driveway to turn a vehicle around but most people reverse in to their garages on the High Street
- **Conclusion: No objection**

Action: Clerk

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

No planning decisions, for Ufford had been taken by ESC in February. The following further planning matters were noted.

- a) To agree the letter with reference to the proposed improvements to the A12 (Draft already circulated and amended) – Version 3 had been sent to all after suggested amendments to the original. Cllr. Pearce felt a section asking for an upgraded junction close to Grove Farm should be requested, as this would look to the future when possibly Woodbridge Town FC may move to the former Notcutts land opposite the ES Norse depot. However, the majority of Councillors felt an improvement may make development more attractive. Cllr. Mayhew proposed v.3 of the document be finalised and sent. This was seconded by Cllr. Findley and Councillors voted 10 in Favour with 1 abstention.
- b) Additional Item - The Chair confirmed that the following applications in Melton should be heard by the ESC Planning Committee (South) on 30<sup>th</sup> March:
  - 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
  - DC/20/1831/OUT - Outline Application with Some Matters Reserved - Residential development of up to 55 dwellings, access off St Andrews Place - Land Off St Andrews Place & Waterhead Lane St Andrews Place Melton

It was also noted that SCC Highways had commented with an objection to the proposed entrance on the plans for the latest application at Hill Farm, High Street (DC/21/0466/VOC); these comments may result in amended plans being submitted.

Action: Clerk

**6. To sign Minutes of meeting dated 16<sup>th</sup> February 2021:**

The minutes of the Full Council meeting dated 16<sup>th</sup> February 2021 had been circulated. The minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr. Hawthorne, 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

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

Cllr. Mayhew gave the following updates on the project:

- Report circulated and displayed
- Excellent news that the project is now past its target but additional properties are still required to sign up in case others drop out
- Ufford are part of Tier 3 of the rollout and vouchers will be available to assign from 1<sup>st</sup> April.

Cllr. Mayhew was thanked for his tremendous effort in managing this project. He also agreed to provide information to Councillors for them to have an opportunity to approach residents who haven't yet signed up.

**Action: All Councillors**

**8. Ufford Community Hall Charity – To receive update on any candidates for the role of Trustee and Committee Member to the Ufford Community Hall Charity:**

The Clerk confirmed that, to date, no one had stepped forward to represent the Parish Council on the Hall Charity. Cllr. Skinner reiterated what a very easy role it was with minimal effort required and attendance at just 3 or 4 meetings a year.

The Chair asked if the item could remain on the agenda.

**Action: Clerk**

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

- a) School Lane / Crownfields Bench – This project was on hold until the funds could be requested from Cllr. Poulter (after 1<sup>st</sup> April). However the licence had been obtained and the Clerk would ask ES Norse to fix the bench (this had to be completed by someone holding a licence to work on the highway).
- b) ANPR SID request to SCC – This request had been lodged with the SCC Team and Ufford were 'on the list'.

**Action: Clerk**

**10. Finance Matters:**

- a) To receive accounts for February 2021 and inspect the Bank Statements:

The Accounts to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2021 had been sent to all and Cllr. Skinner had verified the figures on the accounts to the actual amounts when viewed online.

b) To authorise the following Invoices for Payment:

i. J Hallett (Salary + Office & mileage expenses)	£694.98
ii. SCC Pension Fund (Clerk's pension)	£170.07
iii. SALC (Payroll Service for 6 months)	£54.00
iv. Suffolk County Council (Street Lighting)	£1,204.71
v. Ufford PUNCH (Annual Subscription)	£18.50

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 set up the payments, send electronic copies of the invoices to the authorisers and request authorisations.

The Clerk advised that she had been in contact with SCC Street Lighting regarding the cost of the energy for the 11 street lights, as the cost seemed rather high. They had provided details for upgrading the lamps and these would be forwarded to the Councillors the following day for discussion at the April meeting.

c) To note Payments made since last meeting:

i. Staples UK Ltd (Ink and Laminate Pouches)	£124.78
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d) To note Payments received since last meeting:

i. VAT Refund	£224.89
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**Action: Clerk**

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

- a) To acknowledge report from Cllr. Hawthorne – Cllr. Hawthorne's report had been circulated and she expanded on a couple of items.

Councillors were asked if they thought it was appropriate to try to sell the Elm that would be cut in April. After discussion it was agreed that the Parish Council had no problem with this, as long as the Woodlands Group could organise and manage it.

Cllr. Hawthorne also reported that the Woodlands Group would be holding an AGM sometime in the coming months.

- b) To receive update on WWII Information Board and to agree final wording and images to be used – The final layout had been agreed with the designer and the board was expected in the next few weeks. A small spelling error had been noticed at the last minute but it was too late to correct. It was agreed that the Maintenance Man would erect the board and the new display for the old board.

- c) To receive notification of expenditure on Tree Felling planned for April 2021 – Cllr. Hawthorne explained some urgent work that was required in the woods. This was two days' work but only one would be charged (£450 + VAT) with the wood being taken to compensate for the other days' work.

- d) To discuss 'Pros and Cons' document with reference to extending the Permissive Path from the Car Park to the existing footpath off The Avenue – Cllr. Hawthorne requested that this item be postponed until September, when other projects would be complete.

Action: Cllr. Hawthorne

## 12. Highways:

- a) To receive Footpath Report, update on the QR Code Project and to agree expenditure for QR code discs – The Footpath Report had been circulated and the following items were discussed:
- Footpaths in General – All Working Group members were thanked for their work in keeping the village paths open and accessible
  - Barbed Wire Fence at Ufford Thicks – A report of a new barbed wire fence at Ufford Thicks was given and there was concern that the barbs were on the outside of the fence and next to a Restricted Byway. After discussion it was agreed that the Byway was wide and nettles around the fence would soon grow up, making it unlikely that anyone would harm themselves on the wire.
  - Path between Spring Road and East Lane – Cllr. Findley was asked if he could contact the land owner (at Mill House) to ask if a ditch could be dug out and cleared for some of the surface water to drain away
  - Byng Hall Brook – Cllr. Findley also agreed to contact the owners of the land at Byng Hall Brook, near The Old Rectory and ask them to remove the Bund
  - QR Codes – Cllr. Findley advised that this project would cost just under £400 in total but would result in much more robust codes being displayed. Cllr Findley and the Clerk were thanked for the work done on this project. The information available is fascinating . Cllr. Jones proposed this expenditure. This was seconded by Cllr. Foskett and all Councillors were in agreement. Cllr. Crocker was especially thanked for his work on the information about Red House.
- b) To discuss maintenance of Sogenhoe Chapel – Councillors discussed the following elements of looking after the grounds at Sogenhoe Chapel:
- Could be a place for a managed re-wilding project
  - A village working party could be set up (to spread the workload)
  - The Information Board is looking tired and could do with replacing, potentially it could be placed outside the grounds so that people could see where it was.
  - The path leading to the Chapel needs to be cut if we are going to encourage people to go
  - The bench at the chapel is in poor condition and needs replacing

No decisions were made, and this item will be discussed again at the April meeting.

- c) To receive update on the Quiet Lanes project and to receive notification that Loudham Lane and Lower Road have been added – The Clerk confirmed that both Loudham Lane and Lower Road (in to Old Church Road, Melton) had been added to the plan and that the Public Consultation meeting would take place on 24<sup>th</sup> March at 6.00pm. A question was asked as to why Spring Lane had not been suggested and the Clerk advised she would try to add it.
- d) To discuss the proposed ‘re-wilding’ sites in the village (Yarmouth Road/B1438 and St Mary’s Churchyard) – The two sites suggested for re-wilding by ES Norse were:
- St Mary’s Churchyard – The Clerk had spoken to the PCC and they had indicated they would try to have the decision not to cut the Churchyard reversed. They would seek assistance from the Parish Council if necessary
  - Yarmouth Road/B1438 – ES Norse had confirmed the specific areas earmarked for ‘re-wilding’ were the Triangle at the top of The Avenue and the grass area to the right as you approached the top of the Avenue. Councillors felt long grass and weeds on both these areas would be a danger to drivers using this location and, as one of the main entrances to the village, would soon look unsightly (the wild flowers would last just a few weeks before brambles and nettles took over). The Clerk was asked to write to ES Norse (with photographs) to ask them to reverse their decision.

**Action: Cllr. Findley and Clerk**

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

- a) Risk Assessment (Financial) – Both documents had been circulated and were taken together. Cllr. Skinner proposed they be adopted. This was seconded by Cllr. Edworthy and all were in agreement. The Clerk was asked to finalise and publish
- b) Risk Assessment (Non-Financial) – See above

**Action: Clerk**

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

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

- Cllr. Jones – Highways Meeting (Notes already circulated)
- Cllr. Findley – ASB Meeting (Notes already circulated)
- Cllr. Findley – Planning Forum (Notes already circulated) – It was noted that Pightle House had been awarded a Quality of Place Award by ESC and the Clerk was asked to inform the Punch Team.

**15. To discuss format of meetings between April and June (to continue with remote meetings or to return to face-to-face)** – The Clerk confirmed that the legislation that permitted remote meetings only ran until 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021. Therefore, the April meeting (and the APM planned for 27<sup>th</sup> April) could go ahead via Zoom, but subsequent meetings may have to be held in person, with appropriate social distancing and assessment of vaccination rollout.

However, it was likely that the rules would change and that each meeting would need to be assessed individually.

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

- Items carried forward
- Signing of Year End Accounts and all paperwork

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as **20<sup>th</sup> April 2021 at 7.00pm**, via Zoom.

**Action: Clerk**

The meeting was closed at 9.05pm

Signed:.....

Date: .....

Chair: Dr. Kathryn M Jones

Judi Hallett  
Clerk to Ufford Parish Council

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