

Minutes of Ufford Parish Council Meeting

Held on 27th April 2021 ~ 7.00pm

Via Zoom Video/Audio Conference

Present

Cllr. Kathryn Jones (Chair)
Cllr. Pat Edworthy
Cllr. Jane Hawthorne
Cllr. John Skinner

Cllr. Keith Bennett
Cllr. David Findley
Cllr. Ashley O'Malley

Cllr. Nick Crocker
Cllr. Guy Foscett
Cllr. David Pearce

Judi Hallett (Clerk)

Cnty. Cllr. Alexander Nicoll

Dist. Cllr. Carol Poulter

No members of the Public

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. To receive Apologies for absence:

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr. Steve Mayhew (Previous engagement). These were accepted.

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:

- **Cnty. Cllr. Alexander Nicoll** – Cllr. Nicoll confirmed he was in the Purdah period due to the forthcoming elections but was happy to answer any questions and reported that he was working as usual.
 - *There were no questions for Cllr. Nicoll*
- **Dist. Cllr. Carol Poulter** – Cllr. Poulter's report had been circulated and she further commented on the following items:
 - Covid-19 – Cases decreasing in Suffolk and vaccination numbers very good, over 40's now being called for vaccination and all over 60's have now been called for their second vaccination.
 - Grants – Cllr. Poulter was thanked for the grants for the Grass Strimmer/Cutter and Friendship Bench.

Chair's initials.....

- DC/21/0900/FUL at The Den, High Street, Ufford – Cllr. Poulter reported that this application was to be approved, by delegated authority, contrary to a holding objection made by SCC Highways. The Chair clarified that the basis of the objection by SCC Highways was the dimensions of the proposed garage, and whether there was space for cycle storage; also the lack of an electric vehicle charging point. UPC had not made any objection to the application. Cllr Poulter was content to accept the Planning Officer's recommendation.

4. To sign Minutes of meeting dated 16th March 2021:

The minutes of the Full Council meeting dated 16th March 2021 had been circulated. The minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr. Skinner, seconded by Cllr. Crocker and all Councillors were in agreement that they be signed.

The Clerk agreed to publish the minutes on the website.

Action: Clerk

5. Finance Matters:

a) To receive and agree End of Year Accounts to 31st March 2021:

The End of Year Accounts to 31st March 2021 had been sent to all and had been internally audited by Mr Trevor Brown. The Clerk was thanked for her work on the accounts, for the speed at which she was able to take them to the internal auditor and complimented on the observations within the Internal Audit report. Cllr. Pearce proposed they be accepted as a true record of the year's financial transactions. This was seconded by Cllr. Edworthy and all were in agreement. The Clerk suggested all relevant Financial documents would be taken to the Chair for signing after the meeting.

b) To receive and accept Internal Auditor's Report for 2020/21 and 'Annual Internal Audit Report' within Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2020/21:

Mr Brown's Full Internal Audit Report and the 'Annual Internal Audit Report' within Part 3 of the AGAR 2020/21 had both been circulated to all Councillors and were published on the Web Site. Cllr. Bennett proposed that these be acknowledged as received and accepted. This was seconded by Cllr. Findley and all were in agreement.

c) To agree and complete Section 1 of Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2020/21:

The Clerk read aloud each statement on Section 1 of Part 3 of the AGAR 2020/21 and there were no questions. Cllr. Jones proposed that the Council answer in the affirmative to each statement. This was seconded by Cllr. Edworthy and all were in agreement.

- d) To agree and complete Section 2 of Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2020/21:

The proposed entries to Section 2 of Part 3 of the AGAR 2020/21 had been circulated to all and were the figures suggested by the Internal Auditor in his full report. Cllr. Bennett proposed these be used and the form be signed. This was seconded by Cllr. Skinner and all were in agreement.

- e) To agree the CIL Report as at 31st March 2021:

The draft CIL report had been circulated to all and, as it was a 'nil return' had already been published on the Web site. Cllr. O'Malley proposed this be accepted as a true reflection of CIL transactions during the year. This was seconded by Cllr. Hawthorne and all were in agreement.

- f) To agree the Reserve Allocations as at 1st April 2021:

The Clerk suggested that, as a considerable amount of CIL funding had been received, and that allocation of that was to be discussed later on in the agenda, that this matter be discussed at the next meeting where a clearer picture of the reserves would be known. It was agreed to move this item to the May agenda.

- g) To discuss continuing to host a Paper Bank at the Recreation Ground:

The Clerk reported that the hosting of Paper Banks at the Recreation Ground would now incur a charge from Bolton Bros, due to the drop in value of paper. The estimated annual cost would be £74.20 + VAT, based on tonnage collected in 2020. Councillors suggested that the banks were very well used and that the ability to recycle paper outside of the domestic 'Blue' bins meant the sorting of the materials was easier and more items could be placed in the domestic bins. Cllr. Skinner proposed the Paper Banks at the Recreation Ground be retained and the small annual charge accepted. This was seconded by Cllr. Pearce and all were in agreement. The Clerk was asked to inform Bolton Bros of the Council's decision.

- h) To discuss signing up to Microsoft 365 or just OneDrive:

The Clerk reported that the 5Gb of free storage on 'OneDrive' was now not enough and that either an upgrade to 100Gb for £1.99 a month or an upgrade to MS Office 365 for £59.99 a year (with 1Tb of data) was needed. After a short discussion Cllr. Jones proposed that the Council Laptop be upgraded to MS Office 365. This was seconded by Cllr. Edworthy and all were in agreement.

- i) To discuss upgrade to Heritage Trail Leaflet and re-printing (250 at £168 or 500 at £238):

Cllr. Findley reported that the Heritage Leaflets had been updated and had proved very popular in the past year, with only 20 of the original leaflets remaining. Cllr. Jones proposed that 500 new leaflets be printed. This was seconded by Cllr. O'Malley and all were in agreement. Cllr. Findley was thanked for his continuing work on this project.

- j) To discuss request from Ufford Arts Festival for a further £105 towards the cost of hiring Ufford Community Hall for the 2021 Festival:

A letter from the Chair of the Ufford Arts Festival had been circulated. This year the festival hoped to hold an Art Exhibition and Sale in the Community Hall and were requesting an additional £105 to pay for the hire of the hall over two and a half days. Councillors felt this was an excellent community event and Cllr. Edworthy proposed the additional amount be added to the original request. This was seconded by Cllr. Findley and all were in agreement.

- k) To consider refunding petrol costs to Mr S K (Ufford resident) for grass cut during the year on UPC land:

The Clerk reported that Mr S K, an Ufford resident, had cut the grass between the two car parks at Parklands and other pathways for many years, without claiming the cost of the fuel. She has persuaded him to take a small sum in recognition of the fuel he had used and suggested to the Council that £15 per year was a reasonable sum. This amount was proposed by Cllr. Pearce, seconded by Cllr. Skinner and all were in agreement.

The Council also felt it would be a good idea for the PUNCH to do a feature on Mr K as a long term resident of Ufford and previous Community Hall committee member. Cllr. Pearce agreed to speak with Mr K to seek his permission to pass his details to the PUNCH reporters.

- l) To authorise the following Invoices for Payment:

i. D Findley (Ready-mix Mortar)	£9.42
ii. Suffolk.Cloud (Website hosting for 2021/22)	£110.00
iii. SALC (Annual Subscription + Training)	£394.13
iv. Trevor Brown (Internal Audit)	£150.00
v. Friends of Parklands Wood (To replenish Funds)	£200.00
vi. Ufford Players (Grant for 2021)	£145.00
vii. Ufford Arts Festival (Grant for 2021) – as amended	£355.00
viii. St Mary's Church PCC Ufford Parish (Grant 2021)	£600.00
ix. A B Barton (Redwood Carving)	£2,000.00

The above payments were proposed by Cllr. Edworthy, seconded by Cllr. Bennett and all Councillors were in agreement that they be paid. The Clerk advised that the payment for A B Barton was urgent and asked Cllrs. Skinner and Bennett to authorise the payment after the meeting.

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

m) To note Payments made since last meeting:

i. J Hallett (Salary + Office & mileage expenses)	£791.16
ii. SCC Pension Fund (Clerk's pension)	£205.39
iii. HMRC Cumbernauld (Clerk's PAYE)	£51.80

n) To note Payments received since last meeting:

i. CIL Payment	£8,605.29
ii. Tennis Club Licence Fee	£300.00

The Clerk reported that the origins of the CIL payment would be provided by ESC and that the Parish Council had five years in which to spend the funds on projects that would benefit the community.

Action: Clerk and Cllr. Pearce

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

a) DC/21/1305/FUL - Change of use of horticultural glass house to retail plant Centre (3125sqm) ... The Nursery, Main Road, Pettistree - Councillors made the following comments:

- The proposed development is on the B1438, outside of Ufford but will create additional traffic through Ufford
- The development is not of sufficient scale that we can request a slip road on to the A12 but we do need to comment on the additional traffic
- The site will rival Notcutts and Dobbies and may soon have facilities like a Café.
- A storage facility is already set up
- If it does not expand it may fail and empty greenhouses would be an eye-sore. Perhaps it is better to have a garden centre than housing?
- Large lorries will probably have to come through Ufford when leaving the facility.
- The facility currently supplies market traders and supermarkets, that is why the prices are so competitive
- **Conclusion: No comment of support or objection, but a statement about the amount of additional traffic the facility will create through Ufford.**

b) DC/21/1576/FUL - Single storey first floor rear extension together with associated alterations including insertion of conservation roof light on rear roof slope and French doors to rear elevation. - 6 Barrack Lane, Ufford – Councillors made the following comments:

- This is in the Conservation Area but it is at the back of the property and cannot be seen from the road
- The development matches the neighbouring properties
- No comments on line from neighbours
- **Conclusion: No objection** (Prop. Cllr. Jones, Sec. Cllr. Findley and all in agreement)

Action: Clerk

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

The planning decisions, for Ufford taken by ESC in March had been circulated. The following further planning matters were noted.

- a) Committee Hearings of Applications DC/20/1521/FUL (Care Village, Yarmouth Road, Melton) and DC/20/1831/OUT (55 Dwellings at St Andrew's Place, Melton) – The following comments were conveyed to the Councillors:
- DC/20/1521/FUL – Chair permitted to speak at the Committee Hearing, application refused, in line with Officer's recommendation
 - DC/20/1831/OUT – Melton PC and Resident Representative spoke at the Committee hearing, mixed comments from Committee members but they were reminded, by Mr Ridley, of a recent case elsewhere that had been permitted at appeal, at great cost to the Planning Authority. Application had been permitted
 - DC/20/3361/FUL and DC/20/3264/FUL - The Chair also commented that the Decision Notice was still awaited on the permission granted for 136 dwellings in Pettistree

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

Cllr. Mayhew's report had been circulated and Councillors commented on the excellent news that the required number of homes and businesses were now signed up. Cllr. Mayhew was thanked for his work on this project.

Action: Cllr. Mayhew

9. 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 again that, to date, no one had stepped forward to represent the Parish Council on the Hall Charity. The item would remain on the agenda until someone came forward.

Action: Clerk

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

- a) Sogenhoe Chapel – This matter would be moved to the June agenda due to the very full agendas at the April and May meetings
- b) Re-Wilding Areas – The comments from Cllr. Mallinder had been circulated to all and the situation would be monitored.
- c) Fencing at St Mary's Church – The replacement of the two gates at St Mary's Churchyard had now been inspected by ES Norse and the work was currently out for tender, with agreement to replace like for like.
- d) Smock Meadow – Cllr. Findley reported that the drainage work on Smock Meadow was scheduled and would be paid for by the land owners.

Chair's initials.....

11. Street Lights – To discuss options for upgrading the Streetlights and possible allocation of CIL funds to the project– mail sent to Councillors on 17th March 2021:

The Clerk reported that SCC Highways had provided an estimate for replacing all UPC's Street Lights with LED Lanterns as they were now not able to source the old MBFU Lanterns. The estimated total cost of the project was £5,855.71 + VAT; however, this did not include any traffic management, if required and could rise if the wooden poles, where five of the lamps were mounted, needed replacing. The switch to LED lights would save around £60 per year, per light and reduce the Council's Carbon Footprint.

The Clerk suggested that the CIL money could potentially be used for this project, but that this would need to be confirmed. It was calculated that the cost of the project would be paid back by the savings made, after a 10 year period.

After discussion Cllr. Hawthorne proposed all the lights be upgraded, subject to a full survey and more accurate estimation of costs by SCC Highways and funding from the CIL money being confirmed. This was seconded by Cllr. Skinner and all were in agreement.

Action: Clerk

12. 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:

- Redwood Carving – Mr Barton is doing a fantastic job and will be finished tomorrow. We need to get it photographed and put on the insurance [Clerk to contact Insurance Company]; A Bug Hotel will be made of the cut off pieces of wood and sawdust; The EADT had been contacted about doing an article and a suitable plaque would be needed to recognise the reason for the sculpture, the carver and the contribution from the National Lottery
- Redwood Trunk – This could potentially be ringed up and sold or used for a new Village Sign. Councillors were asked to consider options and the matter would be discussed at the June meeting.
- Trees – Saplings and other trees recently planted are doing very well
- WWII Information Board – Due to be delivered tomorrow

- b) To discuss the quote for repairing/extending the MUGA wire & repairing Tennis Court Wire – The Clerk had circulated the two quotes for repairing the MUGA and Tennis Court netting and extending the 'ball stop' netting on the end of the MUGA. She also confirmed that the Tennis Club were happy for the court netting to be repaired. After discussion Cllr. Skinner proposed the quote from Suffolk Tennis Courts Ltd was accepted (with all work being carried out at the same time). This was seconded by Cllr. Crocker and all were in agreement. The Clerk was also asked to investigate if it was worth Investigating if it was possible to claim through insurance as the damage was caused by vandalism in two cases, however, the damage was identified later, and no police reports had been made, and the site is out of range of CCTV.

- c) To discuss quotation for Grass Cutting from ES Norse for 2021/22 – The quote for the grass cutting from ES Norse had been circulated to all (a total annual cost of £405.27). The Clerk suggested this was very reasonable as other companies were likely to quote £100 per visit at least. Cllr. Bennett proposed the contract remained with SC Norse. This was seconded by Cllr. Hawthorne and all were in agreement.
- d) To discuss Tyre Swings in various Trees in Parklands Wood and possible steps the PC should take – Cllr. Hawthorne and the Clerk raised concern at three or four ‘Tyre Swings’ that were attached to trees in Parklands Wood. Some were attached with good rope to large branches but some were attached with less strong rope on smaller branches. After discussion the Clerk was asked to seek advice from the Insurance company.
- e) To discuss the Oak Tree on the boundary of a property in Ufford Place – The Clerk reported that a picture of the tree in question had been sent to Nicholas Newton (ESC Arboricultural Manager) who had commented “*I reckon that is easily over 25-30 years and probably over the 64 years it needs to be to be in the TPO*”.

The tree did have some dead wood in it and the neighbour had suggested she could have that removed, where it over hung her property. The Clerk was asked to draft a letter of reply to the resident and circulate it for comment. Cllr. Hawthorne also agreed that the Woodlands Group would remove the ivy from the base of the tree.

Action: Clerk and Cllr. Hawthorne

13. Highways:

- a) To receive update on the Quiet Lanes project & to formally nominate Byng Hall Road, Spring Lane, Lower Road/Old Church Road (Melton) and Loudham Lane (part of) as Quiet Lanes – The Clerk reported that the Public Consultation Meeting had taken place and that there were a number of questions asked and answered. She also reported that the QLS Team had suggested a ‘small donation’ towards the cost of the project should be made by each parish; as Ufford were suggesting four lanes be designated the suggested donation was £200. The cost of such ‘donation’ could also come from CIL money, as definitely a Community project.

It was suggested that the QL designation would do nothing to slow traffic down and that the money would be better spent on repairing existing road signs. However, it was further commented that a designation may make it harder to increase the number of domestic entrances on to the road, thus possibly having an effect on any new dwellings as a result of ‘infill’.

Cllr. Jones proposed that the four routes be officially nominated. This was seconded by Cllr. O’Malley and Councillors voted 6 in favour with 4 against.

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 - Community Partnerships meeting of 18th March - notes distributed – No further comments
- Cllr. Mayhew - SALC Area Forum of 25th March - notes distributed - No further comments

15. Meetings and Councillors:

- a) To discuss format of meetings after and including the May meeting – The Clerk explained the current situation with reference to remote meetings and the judgment of a High Court Hearing that was awaited. Until notice to the contrary, remote meetings could continue until 6th May and face-to-face meetings would resume again after 17th May, if the Government permitted Stage 4 of the Covid Unlocking programme. Cllr. Findley suggested an alternative location for the Annual Parish Meeting might be the Marquee at the White Lion Inn.
- b) To receive resignation from Cllr. Foscett as at 1st May 2021 – The Chair confirmed she had regretfully accepted the resignation of Cllr. Foscett. He had joined the Council in 2012 and had provided both practical and a common sense approach to all matters and his contribution would be truly missed. Cllr. Foscett commented that he had enjoyed his time on the Council and would always be happy to help out with practical items. He suggested he was leaving the Council in a far better state than when he joined.

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

- Annual Meeting items

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as **4th May at 2.00pm**, via Zoom.

Action: Clerk

The meeting was closed at 8.53pm

Signed:.....

Date:

Chair: Dr. Kathryn M Jones

Judi Hallett
Clerk to Ufford Parish Council

Chair's initials.....