

Minutes of Ufford Parish Council Meeting
Held on 26th October 2021 ~ 7.00pm
Ufford Community Hall, The Avenue, Ufford

Present

Cllr. Kathryn Jones (Chair)	Cllr. Keith Bennett	Cllr. Nick Crocker
Cllr. Pat Edworthy	Cllr. David Findley	Cllr. Steve Mayhew
Cllr. Ashley O'Malley	Cllr. Nigel Smith (After 8.05pm)	

Judi Hallett (Clerk) Zero 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. Jane Hawthorne (away) and Cllr. David Pearce (unwell). These were accepted. Apologies had also been received from Dist. Cllr. Carol Poulter and Cnty. Cllr. Alexander Nicoll. Cllr Smith had warned of late arrival.

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

Cllr. Mayhew declared a Non-Pecuniary interest in item 8. as a Trustee of the Ufford Charities.

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 had sent his apologies but had indicated that he was happy to take any questions outside the meeting.
- **Dist. Cllr. Carol Poulter** – Cllr. Poulter had sent her apologies and her report had been circulated earlier in the month.

4. To sign Minutes of meeting dated 21st September 2021:

The minutes of the Full Council meeting dated 21st September 2021 had been circulated. The minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr. Mayhew, 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

Chair's initials.....

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

- a) There were no Planning Applications listed on the Agenda.
- b) No Planning Applications had been received since publication of the Agenda.
- c) To Ratify comments sent to ESC with reference to:
 - i. DC/21/4300/FUL - Alterations to existing conservatory (no change to existing footprint) - Summer House, Lower Road, Ufford – The Clerk had collected the following comments via email:
 - No objections to this
 - An improvement, and no increase in footprint
 - **Conclusion: No objection** (Prop: Cllr. Jones, Sec: Cllr. Edworthy, all in agreement)
 - ii. DC/21/4363/FUL - Front and rear extension – Hillside, Byng Hall Road, Ufford – The Clerk had collected the following comments via email:
 - Don't have any objections
 - Following comments from neighbours, I have no objection
 - It is quite a big extension but I have no objections
 - No real grounds for objection, so no further comment
 - **Conclusion: No objection** (as above)

6. To acknowledge previous months list of ESC Planning decisions and to discuss any other planning matters or reports, to include:

- a) APP/X3540/W/21/3280740 - Land Off Yarmouth Road, Melton : The Chair confirmed that the Council's letter had been submitted to the Inspector and that UPC was registered as an 'interested party' in this case. It was noted that the hearing date for the appeal has been set for 14th December and the letter from UPC, along with a reply from the ESC Planning Officer, was now published on the Planning Portal.
- b) APP/X3540/W/21/3276418 - Land West Of Prow 21 , Woods Lane, Melton – The Chair advised Council that the decision on application DC/20/1636/OUT had been appealed by the applicant. After discussion it was agreed that the appeal was mainly on technical grounds and that there would be no benefit in UPC submitting further evidence to the Inspector.

7. Land Adjoining Oakley, 3 Nicholls Close, Ufford – To receive an update:

The Clerk reported that this matter was now concluded and the sale funds had been received. After discussion, and on the Clerk's recommendation, it was decided not to charge the purchaser for the Clerk's time in dealing with the matter; the Clerk was asked to inform the purchaser of this.

Action: Clerk

Chair's initials.....

8. Ufford Charities – To receive notification that the appointment of two Trustees to the Ufford Charities will expire in February 2022 and to discuss action to take:

The Clerk informed Council that the appointments of Mr Andrew Dennis and Mr Harvey Osbourne as 'Representative Trustees' of UPC on the Ufford Charities would expire on 26th February 2022. It was suggested that both Trustees should be approached and asked if they would like to stand for a further term. If they do, their re-appointment would be scheduled for the January 2022 meeting.

Action: Clerk

9. Neighbourhood Plan (Item taken after item 16 to allow Cllr. Smith to be present):

a) To discuss and decide whether to proceed with making a Neighbourhood Plan for Ufford: A full discussion was held; a brief summary of the comments is as follows:

- [The Chair gave a brief history of the project discussions to date and stated that two documents plus comments from Councillors had been circulated in the recent past]
- ESC can demonstrate a five year housing supply at present, this is backed up by appeals and means we are in a different position from a few years ago
- There are several sites in Ufford that could be seen as a 'threat' (Notcutts Land opposite ES Norse Depot, Meadow formally given permission for a Caravan Site and land next to Goldsmiths) should we try to bring these in to a formal plan and negotiate with the land owners for acceptable uses (e.g. allotments, wildlife parks, limited housing, etc.)
- This could be seen to be a very good time to do a NP, as the ES Local Plan will be revised in 3 or 4 years and we will have to be in step with the NP
- We don't know what the Planning Bill will bring but it is unlikely to abandon NPs and if there are any changes to the rules, we would be at an early stage to adapt
- The costs are much more realistic than first envisaged; there are grants available for consultants and we can do much of the work in house; I would expect the PC to not spend more than £3,000 of its own funds
- We don't know who is out there and who would be willing to be involved. We have many professionals in the village and others who may have skills that would be perfect for the Steering Group; there may be apathy but you never know until you ask.
- If we did decide to move forward the initial process would be:
 - i. Apply to ESC to begin process by identifying the Parish Boundary for a NP
 - ii. Article in January 2022 PUNCH informing residents of what a NP was and inviting them to a Launch meeting later in January
 - iii. If the Launch meeting was poorly attended or there were very few volunteers to be on the Steering Committee then the project would probably not proceed and the PC would re-think.

- iv. If many volunteers stepped forward a Steering Committee would be established (hopefully with a resident taking the position as Chair) and a Consultant sought.
- If there was too little support we could not continue. However, a NP would mean we have more control over the shaping of land uses and we can use other aspects of a NP (such as a Design Code) to ensure Ufford retains its special character.
 - The village has been very good at responding to questionnaires in the past, a response rate of over 85% was achieved for the Parish Plan survey [process followed by the Parish Plan Team recalled by Cllr. Smith]
 - I am concerned at how we will keep the plan in step with the LP; it will need regularly updating and ensuring it is in line with the LP (grants are available for reviews as well)
 - I am generally supportive as I hope a NP will highlight other issues that the PC can become involved in, for example provision for children and young people.
 - Other local parishes have experienced issues but this is mainly due to the plan not being updated or apparent commitments made with developers in the plan not being legally binding.
 - Having a 'Design Code' should help prevent the unsuitable designs that have blighted some areas of the village.
 - [Councillors Jones, Mayhew and Findley indicated their willingness to be part of the Steering Committee]
 - We must be careful to manage expectations; we shouldn't promise what we can't deliver

It was agreed to suspend Standing Order to allow the business of the meeting to be concluded

In conclusion, Cllr. Jones proposed the PC formally agree to take the first steps in to creating a Neighbourhood Plan, these being:

- notification to ESC of the intention and registration of the whole village as the area to be covered by the plan
- re-drafting of an article for the January PUNCH (to be circulated to all for review)
- booking of a Launch Meeting in mid-January (format to be decided at November meeting)

This proposal was seconded by Cllr. Mayhew and all Councillors were in agreement.

- b) If agreed to proceed, to outline the next immediate steps, including how to set up a Steering Group: See above

Action: Clerk

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10. Broadband Project – To receive an update on the Broadband Project:

Cllr. Mayhew reported that 5 projects managed by Ufford's Project Manager had now moved to the 'Live' stage and that Ufford would hopefully move forward shortly.

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

- a) Suffolk Heritage Champion Awards – The Chair reported the excellent news that Cllr. Findley had received an award from the Suffolk Preservation Society for his work on the QR Codes along the Village Heritage Trail walk. Cllr. Findley thanked the Chair for the nomination, and Cllr. Mayhew for proposing the nomination, and it was agreed that the award should be promoted on the PUNCHLine, once the SPS website had been updated.
- b) ESC Quality of Place Awards – The Clerk reported the Redwood Carvings had made it through to Stage 2 of the Awards and a site visit would be made in November.
- c) Lorry Route Map Review – Details of this review by SCC had been circulated and it was agreed that the Clerk should alert residents to it via PUNCHLine and ask for details of any recurring problems.

Action: Clerk

12. SID – To receive an update on the Insurance Claim following the fire within the device:

The Clerk reported that the claim had been chased earlier in the day and the brokers had agreed to chase the Insurers.

Action: Clerk

13. Community Engagement – To discuss suggested improvements to Community Engagement within Ufford (item taken after item 9):

It was agreed that proceeding with a Neighbourhood Plan would involve an enormous amount of Community Engagement and the suggestions gleaned by Cllr. Mayhew at the training event he attended would be put to very good use.

14. Recreation Ground and Parklands Woods:

- a) To acknowledge report from Cllr. Hawthorne - Cllr. Hawthorne's report was the PUNCH Report for November and had been circulated. The Clerk confirmed that Cllr. Poulter had been thanked for her grant of £270 towards the Redwood Trunk Carvings.
- b) To discuss quote received for relocating the Accessible Parking Bay – The Clerk had circulated the quote received from the company who had marked the original parking bays. Although the reasons for moving the bay were understood, it was felt the cost (almost £500) was very high and would result in very little additional benefit.

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It was resolved to ask the Clerk to obtain a quotation for the handrail, and to seek a possible grant towards the cost of improving accessibility, and UPC would bridge the gap if reasonable cost.

- c) To receive an update on improvements to Accessibility at the Recreation Ground – The Clerk reported that she had informed the Community Hall Committee of the Council's intention to put a hand rail in place but that they felt it should be discussed at one of their committee meetings. The Clerk had asked for it to be discussed at the earliest opportunity in order that the project could move forward. Cllr. Edworthy informed Council that the next UCH Committee meeting would be in two weeks and that she would ensure the matter is discussed.
- d) To discuss quotes received for refurbishing surface under swings – The five different quotes for this work (from three different companies) had been circulated. After discussion it was agreed to use NGF Play, once the Clerk could obtain details of the guarantee on the work. It was proposed by Cllr. Mayhew that the expense could partly come from the CIL monies currently being held by the Council and the remainder from General Reserves. This was seconded by Cllr. Jones and all were in agreement.

Action: Clerk

15. Highways/Footpaths:

- a) To discuss management of Sogenhoe Chapel – Cllr. Findley reported that the site did need attention but that the Information Board was currently fit for purpose. He also reported that the Suffolk Archaeological Service had agreed to carry out a Geo-Survey of the area, which would take place in the New Year. After discussion it was agreed that the following actions should take place:
- Clerk to ask Maintenance Man if he would be prepared to cut the hedges
 - Cllr. Jones to approach the Community Partnership about funding the replacement of the Bench

Action: Clerk and Cllr. Jones

16. Finance Matters:

- a) To receive Accounts as at 30th September 2021 – The Clerk reported that there had been no questions following circulation of the accounts and that Cllr. Bennett had agreed to verify the figures in the coming days.
- b) To receive update on adding two new bank signatories – The Clerk reported that there were still no further updates and that the bank is difficult to speak to but she would keep trying.

Cllr. Smith entered the meeting at 8.05pm

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- c) To receive an update on Ufford Sports Football Club's efforts to obtain grants towards pitch improvements – The Clerk reported that no reply to her mails had been received from the Football Club Chair. It was therefore agreed not to chase this matter further.
- d) To discuss grant towards Woodland Winter Wonderland 2021 (approx.. £41.00) – After discussion it was agreed to fund further lights to a maximum value of £100.00. This was proposed by Cllr. Bennett, seconded by Cllr. Findley and all were in agreement.
- e) To discuss a small 'Thank you' gift for the Locum Clerk – The Chair wished the thanks of the Council formally be portrayed to Mrs Ruth Johnson, the Clerk's sister, for stepping in whilst the Clerk was away; these thanks were echoed by all Councillors. Cllr. Jones proposed a gift voucher to the sum of £50 be purchased for Mrs Johnson. This was seconded by Cllr. Bennett and all were in agreement.
- f) To authorise the following Invoices for Payment:
- i. None
- g) To note Payments made since last meeting:
- | | |
|--|---------|
| ii. J Hallett (Salary and Expenses) | £603.47 |
| iii. SCC Pension Fund (Clerk's Pension) | £164.31 |
| iv. HMRC Cumbernauld (Clerk's PAYE) | £39.40 |
| v. J M Purcell (for Remembrance Day Wreath) | £17.50 |
| vi. Ufford Community Hall (Hall Hire for 3 months) | £48.00 |
| vii. SALC (Payroll Service) | £54.00 |
| viii. St Mary's Church Hall, Ufford (Hall Hire for 4 months) | £60.00 |
| ix. Matthew Allen (Tree overhanging Ufford Place) | £330.00 |

Ratification of these payments was proposed by Cllr. Edworthy, seconded by Cllr. O'Malley and all were in agreement.

- a) To note Payments received since last meeting:
- | | |
|---|------------|
| i. ESC Precept (50%) | £10,492.50 |
| ii. UK Power Networks (Wayleave on poles in Woods) | £116.10 |
| iii. Pretty's Solicitors (Sale of land behind 3 Nicholls Close) | £1,000.00 |

Action: Clerk

17. To discuss Councillors' Portfolios:

This item was deferred until the November meeting, where the Chair asked for it to be high on the agenda.

Action: Clerk

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18. Documentation:

- a) To review 'Grants Awards Policy (October 2021)'
- b) To review 'Complaints Procedure (October 2021)'

All Councillors present confirmed these documents had been reviewed. Cllr. Bennett proposed they be adopted *en masse*, this was seconded by Cllr. Smith and all were in agreement. The Clerk was asked to finalise and publish on the website.

Action: Clerk

19. To receive reports on meetings attended on behalf of the Council, to include:

- a) Sizewell Update (attended by Cllr. Mayhew)
- b) SALC Area Forum Meeting (attended by Cllr. Findley) – minutes circulated by Cllr. Mayhew
- c) Festival Of Suffolk Meeting (attended by Cllr. Crocker)
- d) ASB Meeting (attended by Cllr. Findley)

Councillors were thanked for their attendance and the formal reports/minutes. The Clerk was asked to send a PUNCHLine message about the increasing number of shed burglaries in the area at present.

Action: Clerk

20. To discuss the Casual Vacancy on the Council:

After discussion it was agreed that the vacancy on the Council should be advertised on PUNCHLine, on Next-door Ufford, on the HUG Facebook Page and on the village notice boards.

Action: Clerk

21. To receive agenda items for next meeting and agree date of Next Meeting (16th November 2021):

- Items carried forward
- Grant requests for 2022
- Draft Budget for 2022/23

Action: Clerk

The meeting was closed at 9.24pm

Signed:.....

Date:

Chair: Dr. Kathryn M Jones

Judi Hallett
Clerk to Ufford Parish Council

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