

Minutes of Ufford Parish Council Meeting

Held on 16th November 2021 ~ 7.00pm

Ufford Community Hall, The Avenue, Ufford

Present

Cllr. Kathryn Jones (Chair)
Cllr. Pat Edworthy
Cllr. Steve Mayhew
Cllr. Nigel Smith

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

Cllr. Nick Crocker
Cllr. Jane Hawthorne
Cllr. David Pearce

Judi Hallett (Clerk)

Cnty. Cllr. Alexander Nicoll

One Member of the Public

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting

1. To receive Apologies for absence:

Apologies had been received from Dist. Cllr. Carol Poulter.

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):

- The member of public present wished to hear the debate regarding Planning Application DC/21/4801/FUL but did not wish to add any further comments to his letter, which had previously been circulated.

b) Reports or comment from ESC and SCC Councillors:

- **Cnty. Cllr. Alexander Nicoll** – Cllr. Nicoll reported on the following items:
 - Meetings via Video Conferencing – In favour of having the ability to hold these but also feels face-to-face meetings are valuable
 - Inquiry with reference to Melton Care Village – 3 emails had been sent to the Clerk just a few hours previously [forwarded to all the next day] with reference to this inquiry and it was hoped UPC would be attending and speaking [Chair informed Cllr. Nicoll of UPC's intention to attend and speak and the Clerk agreed to re-send the Parish Council's letter to Cllr. Nicoll]
 - Bentwaters Traffic Volumes – Data soon to be available and UPC will be invited to future meetings [Chair indicated that last meeting gave very little notice for attendance and that meetings via Zoom may be better attended]
 - Lorry Review – Hope UPC will be taking part [Chair advised residents had been notified and matter was to be discussed in the meeting]

Chair's initials.....

- **Dist. Cllr. Carol Poulter** – Cllr. Poulter's report had been circulated and she had indicated her support for the Parish Council requesting a grant for replacement of the bench at Sogenhoe Chapel (see item 11. c))

4. To sign Minutes of meeting dated 26th October 2021:

The minutes of the Full Council meeting dated 26th October 2021 had been circulated. The minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr. O'Malley, 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. To discuss and agree responses to the following Planning Applications:

a) DC/21/4801/FUL - Construction of detached garage for two cars and camper van - Malt House, Spring Lane, Ufford. Councillors made the following comments:

- [The Chair gave details of three letters of objection from neighbours to the property, that were on the Portal and details of a conversation she had had with a fourth neighbour]
- The Hedge is of great concern, it is unlikely to survive with all that building work so close and re-planting it would be a great loss.
- In the Design and Access Statement it is proposed that either the hedge is heavily pruned or that it is removed and replanted; however they also rely on the hedge to provide screening
- It is a deciduous hedge and will not provide screening for 4 months of the year
- This property is Grade II listed and there should be a separate LBC application accompanying this one. The D&A Statement refers to the garages being more than 12m from the house but in the case of a Listed Building this is not taken in to consideration; the new development is within the 'curtilage' of the property and therefore LBC is required
- The house is also in the Conservation Area and the proposed new buildings will look very large and will further overcrowd this property
- Is it better to see lots of vehicles or garages?
- This is a very pretty area of Ufford (hence why it is in the Conservation Area) and development of this type will detract from the whole area
- The hedge will not screen the view from Loudham Lane
- The Campervan is large & may have difficulty entering & exiting the garages
- **Conclusion:** Clerk to ask ESC Planning why a LBC Application had not been submitted and prepare a letter of objection (on the above grounds) for review before sending (Prop. Cllr. Jones, Sec: Cllr. Findley, all in agreement)

b) No Planning Applications had been received since publication of the Agenda.

Action: Clerk

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

- a) Appeal of refusal of DC/20/1521/FUL Care Village off Yarmouth Road, Melton: As previously indicated during Cllr. Nicoll's report, the Chair reported that ESC Planning Team had been in contact and that they would be back in contact shortly to discuss details of how and when Cllr. Jones could speak at the Inquiry. It was understood that Melton PC would also be speaking and it felt a good idea that these were co-ordinated. It was uncertain where the inquiry would take place but it would start on 14th December and last 2 or 3 days.

Action: Clerk/Cllr. Jones

7. Finance Matters:

- a) To receive Accounts as at 31st October 2021 – The Clerk reported that there had been no questions following circulation of the accounts and that Cllr. Edworthy had verified the figures shortly after publication.
- b) To receive update on adding two new bank signatories – The Clerk reported that both Cllr. Findley and Mayhew had completed a mandate and these were signed by Cllrs. Edworthy and Hawthorne. The Clerk agreed to dispatch to Lloyds as soon as possible.
- c) To discuss Grant Requests for 2022 – The Clerk had previously circulated the list of Grant requests along with accompanying papers. It was agreed that any grants should only be given to organisations working solely within the village. Lengthy discussion was had on the legal position of giving grants to the Church. This was accompanied by others opinions of the need to keep the Open Graveyard area of the village neat and tidy, when this could not be afforded by the local PCC alone. The Clerk provided details of recent grants to St Mary's PCC. In conclusion it was agreed to give the following grants in 2022:
- St Mary's Church Flowers (for decorations at Christmas) - £100
 - Ufford Arts Festival (towards running costs of the 2022 Festival) - £400
 - St Mary's Ufford PCC (For grass and hedge cutting of the Open Churchyard) - £900

The above grants were proposed by Cllr. Bennett, seconded by Cllr. Edworthy and Councillors voted 8 'For', 1 'Against' and 1 'Abstention'. The Clerk was asked to notify all applicants.

- d) To discuss the Draft Budget for 2022/23 – The Clerk had previously circulated a draft budget, as discussed by the Finance Councillors. A few questions were asked and answered and the Clerk agreed to check that the 'General Reserves' were still within the agreed parameters. Councillors were asked to review the draft budget again, ready for approval at the December meeting.

e) To authorise the following Invoices for Payment:

ii. J Hallett (Salary and Expenses)	£654.18
iii. SCC Pension Fund (Clerk's Pension)	£164.31
iv. K J Thorpe Ltd (MUGA and Tennis Net repairs)	£1,890.00
v. Places4People Ltd (NP Advice)	£72.00
vi. D Findley (Fuel and Cannister for Fuel)	£24.41
vii. J Hawthorne (Various Expenses)	£98.16

The above payments were proposed by Cllr. Mayhew, seconded by Cllr. Edworthy and all were in agreement they be paid. Cllrs. Bennett and Edworthy agreed to authorise them the following day.

a) To note Payments made since last meeting:

- i. None

b) To note Payments received since last meeting:

- i. None

Action: Clerk

8. To discuss Councillors' Portfolios:

The Chair ran through each responsibility currently undertaken by each Councillor and a number of amendments were made. The Clerk was asked to revise the list and send to all.

Action: Clerk

9. Neighbourhood Plan:

- a) To receive update on registration of the intention to construct a Neighbourhood Plan and register the Parish Boundary with East Suffolk Council: The Clerk reported that the initial registration of the Parish Council's intention to establish a Neighbourhood Plan for the parish of Ufford had been approved by East Suffolk Council and the Officer assigned to Ufford's Plan, Mr Adam Nicholls, had been in contact with very positive and helpful advice.
- b) To discuss the draft article for the January PUNCH: The draft article had been circulated and it was agreed to be very eye catching and relevant to the promotion of the project. It was confirmed that the PUNCH Editor had set aside two facing pages of the January edition to publish the article and that all the details would be followed up in a PUNCHLine closer to the Launch Meetings/Exhibition.

It was further agreed not to insert any 'prequel' in the December PUNCH as this may confuse residents if it did not contain enough information.

- c) To discuss format of the Launch Meeting: After debate it was agreed that the following meetings/exhibitions should take place:

- Wed 12th Jan – Exhibition of Plans and Processes (Drop In Event) Ufford Community Hall – 4.30pm ~ 6.00pm
- Wed 12th Jan – Formal Meeting of Plans and Processes ('Sit Down' Event with social distancing) Ufford Community Hall – 7.00pm ~ 8.30pm
- Thur 13th Jan - Formal Meeting of Plans and Processes – Via Zoom – 7.00pm ~ 8.30pm

It was agreed that the draft article should be amended to reflect the above details and re-sent to all for final approval. It should then be sent to the PUNCH Editor as early as possible.

Action: Clerk and Cllr. Findley

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

Cllr. Mayhew had distributed an update on the project the previous day and would monitor the situation.

Action: Cllr. Mayhew

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

- a) Update on Ufford Charities' Trustees – The Clerk reported that both Mr Dennis and Mr Osbourne had agreed to serve a further four year term as Representative Trustees to the Ufford Charities. This re-appointment would be on the January 2022 agenda.
- b) Maintenance of Hedges at Sogenhoe Chapel – The Clerk reported that she was meeting the Maintenance Man on Thursday to discuss the hedges. It was suggested that these were cut to around 6' and the depth reduced.
- c) Additional Item – Community Partnerships Small Grant – The Clerk notified Council that the applications for a Community Partnership Grant had now re-opened. It was agreed that the Clerk should apply for funding to replace the bench in Sogenhoe Chapel (it would require measuring as it has a concrete plinth).

Action: Clerk

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

The Clerk had previously sent around comments from the Insurers indicating that they would not cover the cost of the battery replacement and that due to the age of the equipment they felt it should be covered under a warranty.

After discussion it was agreed that the Clerk should contact the manufacture again and ask for a replacement device to be sent. It was felt unnecessary to return the old kit as it was beyond repair.

The Clerk was also asked to contact the Insurers to enquire whether there would be a refund in the annual premium, now that our claim was not proceeding.

Action: Clerk

13. Consultations – To receive and comments on draft comments for the following ESC Consultations:

- a) Cycling & Walking Strategy (Cllr. Findley) – Cllr. Findley's report on this consultation had been circulated and he was thanked for his analysis. He agreed to provide draft wording for the Clerk to respond formally to the consultation.
- b) Affordable Housing Policy (Cllr. Jones) – Cllr. Jones reported that this policy contained many factors that would be very useful when (and if) the Neighbourhood Plan was constructed but that the draft policy contained nothing to disagree with and therefore did not require reply.

Action: Cllr. Findley

14. Recreation Ground and Parklands Woods:

- a) To acknowledge report from Cllr. Hawthorne - Cllr. Hawthorne's report had been circulated and was added to with further information regarding the Redwood Carvings.
- b) To receive update on the relocation of the Accessible Parking Bay and the Hand Rail – The Clerk reported that Cllr. Nicoll had agreed to fund up to £700 to the two projects. She had also contacted SEH Asphalt about amending the original request to remove the original markings but had been informed that the figure quoted was a 'minimum charge' so removing the 'removal of the existing markings' would make no difference to the price. It was felt this charge was excessive and the Clerk was asked to seek alternative quotes. If none was available, authority to proceed would be sought via e-mail.

The Clerk also reported that the installation of the Hand Rail would be a maximum of £500 if supplied and installed by Mr Coe. Cllr. Edworthy reported that the Community Hall Committee had no objections to either project going ahead.

- c) To discuss reports of Anti-Social Behaviour at the Recreation Ground – It was noted that there had been an increased level of anti-social behaviour around the Community Hall but it was not excessive. It was also reported that the Football Club Chairman had been asked to speak to the players of all teams to ask them to reduce the amount of swearing during the matches, as this was in earshot of children using the Play Equipment. It was agreed to monitor this situation.

It was agreed to suspend Standing Order 3. x) to allow the meeting to conclude

- d) To discuss request from ES Norse for use of the Recreation Ground Car Park – After discussion it was agreed that there was unfortunately no scope to allow for permanent parking by ES Norse Staff, due to very busy periods when clubs were in attendance at the Community Hall. The Clerk suggested that a small number of vehicles could potentially use the parking bays in Parklands but was asked by Cllr Pearce not to suggest this as he felt that residents would not be happy. The Clerk was asked to reply to ES Norse.

Action: Clerk

15. Highways/Footpaths:

- a) To discuss reports of Lorries on Ufford Roads – Details of this consultation had been circulated to all residents receiving the PUNCHLine and three replies had been received by the Clerk. It was felt more evidence was needed and Councillors were asked to provide this to the Clerk before she responded to the consultation.
- b) To receive an update on missing road signs in Lower Street – The Clerk reported that at least three road signs were either damaged or missing along Lower Street. It was agreed that a site visit should establish the extent of the damage and then further discussions could take place around replacing them.
- c) To receive the November 2021 Footpath Report – The latest report had been circulated and Ms Forge was thanked for her work on it. Cllr. Findley reported that the Footpaths Volunteer Working party now had two new volunteers, Mr Skinner and Ms Forge. He also indicated that he had been in contact with SCC Rights of Way team to advise of an error on the 2016 Definitive Map that did not show the relocation of the boundary with Melton, but showed it through Melton Park. He would also be in discussion with the appropriate land owners regarding the removal of a stile at the junction of Footpath 29 and 21, where it enters Hospital Wood, which was making use of the path difficult for some.

Action: Clerk and Cllr. Findley

16. To discuss the casual vacancy on the Council and any next steps:

Councillors were disappointed that there had been no response to the recent advertisements for a new Councillor. A number of possible candidates were discussed and it was agreed that these residents should be contacted, in an agreed order, to ascertain their level of interest.

Action: Cllr. Jones

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

- a) Community Partnership Meeting (Report issued by Cllr. Jones on 29th October)
- b) Laying of Wreath for Remembrance Day (Cllr. Jones)

18. To receive agenda items for next meeting and agree date of Next Meeting (14th December 2021):

- Discuss and Agree Budget for 2022/23
- Discuss and Agree Precept for 2022/23
- Any item carried forward from this meeting

Action: Clerk

The meeting was closed at 9.25pm

Signed:.....

Date:

Chair: Dr. Kathryn M Jones

Judi Hallett
Clerk to Ufford Parish Council

Chair's initials.....