

Minutes of Ufford Parish Council Meeting

Held on 18th January 2022 ~ 7.00pm

Ufford Community Hall, The Avenue, Ufford

Present

Cllr. Kathryn Jones (Chair)
Cllr. Pat Edworthy
Cllr. Ashley O'Malley
Cllr. Vincent Smith

Cllr. Keith Bennett
Cllr. David Findley
Cllr. David Pearce

Cllr. Nick Crocker
Cllr. Jane Hawthorne
Cllr. Nigel Smith

Judi Hallett (Clerk)

Cnty. Cllr. Alexander Nicoll (*until 7.15pm*)

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting

1. To receive Apologies for absence:

Apologies had been received from Cllr. Steve Mayhew (Away); these were accepted.
Apologies had also 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*):

- None

b) Reports or comment from ESC and SCC Councillors:

- **Cnty. Cllr. Alexander Nicoll** – Reported on the following items: Meeting re. traffic created by Bentwaters Park between Highways and local villages; HGV review (data currently being analysed and will be a good starting point for when monitoring of Sizewell C traffic starts); Meeting with Police (speeding still a high priority and it is hoped new SIDs will allow for instant retribution); 'Bus Back Better' project (looking to improve bus services in the County, learning from lessons learnt by the TFL group in London, funding applied for, if not fully available it is hoped some improvements can be made). Cllr. Nicoll also stated that he was very pleased Ufford would be holding a 'Launch' meeting for a possible Neighbourhood Plan and he would assist in any way he could. Cllr. Nicoll was thanked for his support and he left the meeting.
- **Dist. Cllr. Carol Poulter** – Cllr. Poulter's report had been circulated earlier in the month

Chair's initials.....

4. To sign Minutes of meeting dated 14th December 2021:

The minutes of the Full Council meeting dated 14th December 2021 had been circulated. The minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr. Hawthorne, seconded by Cllr. N. Smith 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/21/5550/FUL – Erection of a Solar Photovoltaic Array at Land at Park Farm, Loudham Hall Road, Loudham. Councillors made the following comments:

- [It was first established that the Council should comment, even though the proposed development was outside of Ufford]
- I have three main concerns:
 - i. This is prime agricultural land that will be lost, Solar Arrays like this should be placed on poor quality agricultural land
 - ii. There is a footpath across this land and we need to ensure it is preserved (although the view from it, if the development goes ahead, will be much less pleasant than it is presently)
 - iii. There should be a full archaeological survey of the site before any development starts
- I am concerned at the noise produced by such panels, these will disturb the wildlife, including the badgers
- The Panels are high due to the sloping nature of the land and the requirement for them to be in full sunshine as long as possible
- What about 'glint and glare' – will it affect drivers on the A12 [it was thought not as similar arrays next to other major trunk roads had no effect on drivers]
- What about the ecology below the panels (re-wilding, sheep, etc); there is no mention of this in the application
- Because of a reduction in Government grants, solar 'farms' need to be larger to make a profit
- The panels are very high and will protrude over hedging around the site.
- We need to consider that this will power over 5,000 houses in the area and perhaps it is better to have this than houses [housing development felt unlikely on this site due to very poor road network]
- The application documents contain several errors, e.g. referring to "emerging Local Plan", with policies LP04/ LP24 and to Norfolk Coast AONB!
- The site is very close to the Deben Valley.
- A consultation did take place in the summer and showed very few attendees.
- **Conclusion:** To raise 'concerns' to the plans using the above comments (Prop. Cllr. Findley, Sec: Cllr. Jones, Councillors voted 7 'For', 1 'Against' and 2 'abstentions' to this motion). The Clerk agreed to draft a letter.

- 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) Update on the Appeal of refusal of DC/20/1521/FUL Care Village off Yarmouth Road, Melton: Cllr. Jones reported there was no real update to this case. The ESC Portal still stated that the Public Inquiry was planned for mid-December 2021 but the Planning Inspectorate Portal detailed 'no date' for the inquiry; both portals will continue to be monitored.
- b) Additional Item - Crown Nursery (DC/21/3237/FUL) – Cllr. Jones reported that SCC Highways had lodged a letter with ESC Planning on 23rd December 2021, with a 'holding objection'. The Planning officer had confirmed to the Clerk that the matter was now in the hands of the applicant, to try to resolve the concerns of the Highways department.
- c) Additional Item – Woods Lane (DC/20/1636/OUT) – Cllr. Jones reported that this application which had been refused, appeal lodged, and now the date 8th February has been given for an Informal Hearing.

Action: Clerk/Cllr. Jones

7. Finance Matters:

- a) To receive Accounts as at 31st December 2021 – The Clerk reported that there had been no questions following circulation of the accounts and that Cllr. Bennett had verified the figures.
- b) To review all Internal Financial Controls and the effectiveness of the Internal Auditor – The Clerk had forwarded a letter from the present Internal Auditor (Trevor Brown) to all Councillors. It was proposed by Cllr. Bennett that the Council had the appropriate financial controls in place and that the Internal Auditor was both independent and effective. This was seconded by Cllr. Edworthy and all Councillors were in agreement.
- c) To receive update on adding two new bank signatories – Cllr. Findley reported that he had still not received his card and card reader. The Clerk was asked to contact Lloyds for an update.
- d) To authorise Clerk's attendance at Councillor Training with SALC (total cost £75.00) – This item was explained more fully in item 10. a) but for the purposes of authorising the expenditure, Cllr. Jones proposed up to £75.00 was spent on the Clerk attending the SALC Councillor Training, this was seconded by Cllr. O'Malley and all were in agreement.

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e) To authorise the following Invoices for Payment:

ii. J Hallett (Salary and Expenses)	£707.72
iii. SCC Pension Fund (Clerk's Pension)	£164.31
iv. HMRC Cumbernauld (Clerk's PAYE)	£30.20
v. STC Solutions Ltd (CCTV Notices and assistance with incident)	£101.40
vi. J Hawthorne (3 Storage boxes)	£9.99
vii. SC Norse Ltd (Removal of Old Notice Board)	£60.00
viii. Suffolk Digital Ltd (Printing for Neighbourhood Plan Launch)	£112.80
ix. SALC (Clerk's Training)	£60.00

The above payments were proposed by Cllr. V. Smith, seconded by Cllr. Edworthy and all were in agreement they be paid. The Clerk agreed to contact two Councillors to request they authorise the online payments the following day.

a) To note Payments made since last meeting:

- i. None

b) To note Payments received since last meeting:

- i. AXA Insurance (Claim for SID) £1,565.00

Action: Clerk

8. Neighbourhood Plan - To discuss postponement of Launch Meetings and Exhibition and to agree any action to be taken:

Cllr. Jones reported that due to a high incidence of Covid infections the decision had been made to postpone the Neighbourhood Plan launch meetings. Residents were informed by PUNCHLine and social media. The positive news was that four residents had contacted the Clerk with reference to the plan, with several expressing an interest in volunteering.

It was agreed that the Council would work towards holding the launch meetings in early April, with details in the April PUNCH magazine and on the PUNCHLine.

Action: Clerk and Cllrs. Findley, Mayhew and Jones

9. Project Updates – To receive updates on the following projects:

a) Youth Club – The Clerk reported that the resident interested in setting up a Youth Club had been in communication and was presently gauging support for a Committee before seeking interest from local young people.

b) Broadband Project – Cllr. Mayhew had indicated in late December that the project had been approved by the DCMS but further instructions were awaited.

- c) Platinum Jubilee – To agree location for Oak Tree – The Council debated two possible locations for the tree: the first close to the entrance of the Recreation Ground (between the Car Park and the Football Pitch) and a second, behind the Community Hall in the open piece of land; the first was felt to be preferable. The Clerk agreed to work with Cllrs. Hawthorne and N. Smith to assess the site and to report back to the next meeting. It was also agreed that water retention aids may be required to ensure the tree has sufficient water throughout the summer.

Action: Clerk and Cllrs. N. Smith and Hawthorne

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

- a) Councillor Training – It was suggested, following the Clerk's attendance at the SALC Councillor Training, she would produce notes sheets for each session and run a Zoom to cover 2 modules at a time. This was agreed.
- b) Community Friendship Bench – The Clerk reported that she had chased ES Norse re installation of the Community Friendship Bench again but had heard nothing. She suggested she chased one further time and then engaged with another company; this was agreed.

11. Ufford Charities – To reappoint Mr Andrew Dennis and Mr Harvey Osborne as Representative Trustees of Ufford Parish Council, on the Ufford Charities, with effect from 26th February 2022:

The Clerk had reported at the November 2021 meeting that Messrs Dennis and Osbourne had agreed to serve a further four year term as Representative Trustees on the Ufford Charities. Cllr. Jones proposed this appointment. This was seconded by Cllr. Bennett and all were in agreement. The Clerk was asked to notify the Clerk to the Trustees of the appointments.

Action: Clerk

12. Recreation Ground and Parklands Woods:

- a) To receive update on the relocation of the Accessible Parking Bay and the Hand Rail – The Clerk reported that the Accessible Parking Bay had been marked, invoice yet to be received, and the Hand Rail should be installed in the next month.

Action: Clerk

13. Highways/Footpaths:

- a) To receive an update on the SID – The Clerk recalled the history of the SID for the benefit of the new Councillors. She further reported that, quite unexpectedly, the insurance claim had been paid (£1,565.00). After discussion the following actions were agreed:

- i. Clerk to obtain quotes for SIDs from companies other Councils have had a positive experience with.
- ii. Clerk to write to SG Manufacturing to ask if they would refund the difference between the net price of the original SID and the amount paid by the insurance claim.

Action: Clerk

14. Documentation – To acknowledge review and adoption of the following documents:

- a) FOI Procedure (Jan 2022)
- b) Equal Opportunities Policy (Jan 2022)
- c) Safeguarding Children and Young Adults Policy (Jan 2022)

The Clerk confirmed that the short introductory paragraph suggested by Cllr. Bennett was now included in the FOI Procedure. It was also suggested that some of the telephone numbers at the end of the Safeguarding Children and Young Adults Policy were out of date and the Clerk agreed to check each one.

A question was asked as to whether the Safeguarding Children and Young Adults Policy covered activities within the Community Hall (such as the Bridge Club or Tia Chi) and the Recreation Ground (such as Football or use of the Play Equipment). It was agreed that it did not, it only covered activities specifically organised by the Parish Council. In these circumstances it was agreed to send a copy of the document to both the Hall Committee and the Football Club.

With the above in mind, Cllr. V. Smith proposed the documents be adopted. This was seconded by Cllr. N Smith and all were in agreement. The Clerk agreed to make the necessary amendments and publish.

Action: Clerk

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

- a) Cllr. K Jones – Community Partnership Meeting – Cllr. Jones' report had been circulated and it was noted that there had been specific mention of funding for Youth work. There were no further comments or questions.

The Clerk left the meeting

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16. Clerk – to consider request from Clerk for Salary Scale to be reviewed –

Councillors discussed the Clerk's current pay grade and possible alternatives.

The Clerk re-entered the meeting

The Chair informed the Clerk that the Council had unanimously agreed to raise the Clerk's Pay Grade to SCP17, from 16th March 2022. For the purposes of the minutes, this amendment was formally proposed by Cllr. Jones, seconded by Cllr. O'Malley and all Councillors were in agreement.

The Clerk thanked the Council and agreed to notify SALC.

Action: Clerk

17. To receive agenda items for next meeting and agree date of Next Meeting (15th February 202):

- Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations

Action: Clerk

Cllr. Hawthorne advised Council that the award ceremony for the ESC Quality of Place Awards would take place on 4th February.

The meeting was closed at 8.42pm

Signed:.....

Date:

Chair: Dr. Kathryn M Jones

Judi Hallett
Clerk to Ufford Parish Council

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