

Minutes of Ufford Parish Council Meeting

Held on 13th December 2022 ~ 7.00pm

Ufford Community Hall, The Avenue, Ufford

Present

Cllr. David Findley (Chair)
Cllr. Pat Edworthy
Cllr. Steve Mayhew
Cllr. Vincent Smith

Cllr. Keith Bennett
Cllr. Jane Hawthorne
Cllr. Ashley O'Malley

Cllr. Nick Crocker
Cllr. Kathryn Jones
Cllr. Nigel Smith

Judi Hallett (Clerk)

No members of the public were present

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting

1. Apologies for absence:

a) To Receive Apologies:

Apologies had been received from Cllr. David Pearce (Previous commitment). Apologies had also been received from County Cllr. Alexander Nicoll. The Clerk informed Council that Cllr. Pearce had tendered his resignation from the Council as he was finding it difficult to get to meetings. The Chair wished his thanks to Cllr. Pearce to be recorded, remarking that his contributions had always been very welcome and his views were always considered. It was also remarked that Cllr. Pearce had brought issues facing residents of Parklands to the attention of the Council in a timely manner.

b) To Accept Apologies:

Cllr. Hawthorne proposed that the apologies of Cllr. Pearce were accepted. This was seconded by Cllr. O'Malley and all were in agreement.

2. To receive any:

a) Declarations of Pecuniary Interest in Agenda Items

[Declared when item 8. e) was discussed] Cllr. Findley declared a pecuniary interest in item 8. e) as one payment was a reimbursement of the new Incubator, which he had purchased.

b) Declarations of Non-Pecuniary Interest in Agenda Items

Cllr. V Smith declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 11. c) of the agenda, as the Treasurer of the Community Hall Committee.

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c) Applications for Dispensation on Agenda Items

None

d) Declarations of Gifts or Hospitality received over the value of £25.00

None

e) Notification of Lobbying with reference to any Planning Application to be discussed

None

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 was distributed the day after the meeting]
- **Cnty Cllr. Alexander Nicoll** – No report had been submitted

4. To sign Minutes of meeting dated 15th November 2022:

The minutes of the Full Council meeting dated 15th November 2022 had been circulated and slight amendments had been made to the initial draft. The minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr. Bennett, seconded by Cllr. Crocker and all Councillors, who were in attendance at the meeting, 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) There were none

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

Receipt of the list of Planning Decisions was acknowledged and there were no further questions.

- a) To acknowledge receipt of reply to UPC's complaint to East Suffolk Council with reference to the decision making process for DC/21/3237/FUL – The reply from ESC had been circulated. Concern was raised regarding the third paragraph of the response, and its reference to *'speakers are not subject to any form of cross examination nor the need to prove anything they say'*. Cllr. V Smith suggested a letter to Cllr. Poulter to obtain her view on the position taken by East Suffolk Council Planning; this was agreed and the Clerk was asked to draft a letter to Cllr. Poulter, in conjunction with Cllrs. Findley and V Smith. It was agreed that the letter should be copied to the Chairman of East Suffolk Council
- b) Update on the Appeal of refusal of DC/20/1521/FUL Care Village off Yarmouth Road, Melton: Cllr. Jones reported that the appeal for the Care Village had been refused, with the Inspector citing the special landscape as the main reason for refusal but also the absence of the site in the Melton Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr. N Smith reminded Council that in a previous Local Plan, the specific 'green space' of land between Melton and Ufford had been mentioned; unfortunately this was not within the current plan.
- c) Additional Item – DC/22/2130/FUL - Renovation of cottage, conversion of garage to annexe/ additional living accommodation, erection of 2 bay cart lodge with room over at Mistletoe Cottage, Loudham Lane, Ufford – The Clerk had distributed revised plans for this application which contained minor changes. Councillors commented that the amendments did not alter their view on the scale and overlooking nature of the proposed development and it was agreed that a further letter of objection should be sent stating this. It was suggested that the letter should contain reference to the Ufford Neighbourhood Plan and the Design Code, which will form part of the Plan. The Clerk was also asked to alert any other resident who had originally written to ESC and all Councillors were advised that they were permitted to write individual letters, should they wish to do so.

Action: Clerk

7. Neighbourhood Plan:

- a) To receive an update on the work done by NP Steering Group – The Clerk had circulated a report on the work of the NP Steering Group to date. The following items were highlighted and questions asked:
 - Speed of the project – The Consultant (Rachel Leggett) was pushing production of the Plan along at a healthy pace, a very welcome situation

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- Consultation and Volunteers – The Household Survey had been a success (with an estimated 50% returns); this had only been achievable because of support from the Steering Group and additional volunteers.
- Q. If the Design Code draft is re-written, will this be an extra cost? No
- Q. It was quite concerning to read some of the answers in the Survey as they implied that some residents were not aware that the village had two pubs, a 'sports field' or a dedicated Footpaths Map. What can we do to promote the village amenities? Is it time the PC had a presence on Social Media? Matter to be placed on the January Agenda for discussion.

Cllr. N Smith was thanked for inputting all 82 paper responses of the Household Survey, a job that originally was supposed to be distributed to all SG members.

b) To agree the response to the draft Wickham Market Neighbourhood Plan –
Councillors made the following comments:

- The plan covers a number of non-planning matters, such as parking, but WM do have a particular issue with parking
- The planned additional housing will inevitably increase the traffic along the High Street in Ufford, especially southbound.

In conclusion it was agreed that a letter of support should be sent to Wickham Market Parish Council but no specific comments on the plan should be made.

Action: Clerk

8. Finance Matters:

- a) To receive Accounts as of 30th November 2022 – The Accounts had been sent to all and Cllr. Mayhew had verified that the accounts matched the actual figures in the Bank Accounts.
- b) To discuss an agree the draft Budget 2023/24– The amended draft budget had been sent to all, along with the estimated rise in the ESC Element of the Council Tax for 2023/24. The following amendments/suggestions were made:
- The present forecast for reserves as at 1st April 2023 is £11,599 earmarked and £11,037 in general reserves, I think this is acceptable and therefore the budget for 2023/24 is appropriate, given the uncertainty around the NP grant
 - Should the NP grant not be available next year, we should be able to fund the project to conclusion, the budget will allow for this.

In conclusion, Cllr. Findley proposed the budget be accepted and finalised. This was seconded by Cllr. Mayhew and all were in agreement.

- c) To discuss an agree 2023/24 Precept Request– The following amendments/suggestions were made:
- ESC will be putting their charges up by 2.81% so I feel we should be in line.

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- This is a modest increase and will allow the Council to complete the NP, should the grant not be available.

In conclusion, Cllr. V Smith proposed a precept of £22,904 was requested from ESC. This was seconded by Cllr. Jones and all were in agreement.

In addition, Cllr. Mayhew proposed that, until the NP grant was confirmed, all discretionary spend was paused. This was seconded by Cllr. V Smith and all were in agreement.

- d) To discuss which Recycling Bin to purchase for the Recreation Ground, if any – After discussion, it was agreed not to purchase a separate recycling bin at the present moment. However, the Clerk was asked to add an item to the January Agenda to discuss a 'Projects List' for spending of CIL funds and any surplus funds, should grants be obtainable.

- e) To authorise the following Invoices for Payment:

i.	J Hallett (Salary and Expenses)	£1,406.31
ii.	SCC Pension Fund (Clerk's Pension)	£449.92
iii.	St Mary's Church Hall, Ufford (Hall Hire for 2022)	£158.00
iv.	NGF Play Ltd (Resurfacing)	£4,931.86
v.	Suffolk County Council (Quiet Lanes Contribution)	£50.00
vi.	Westcotec Ltd (SID Bracket)	£71.40
vii.	Ufford Community Hall (3 Warm Room Bookings)	£60.00
viii.	D Findley (Replacement Incubator)	£175.00

The above payments were proposed by Cllr. Hawthorne, seconded by Cllr. Edworthy and all were in agreement it be paid (Cllr. Findley abstained). Cllrs. Edworthy and Hawthorne agreed to authorise the online payments the following day.

- f) To note Payments made since last meeting:

- i. None

- g) To note Payments received since last meeting:

i.	Astco Recycling (Clothes Bank)	£9.00
ii.	J Hallett (Refund of original Incubator)	£186.99

It was suggested that the Clothes Bank was promoted again, as revenue had fallen.

Action: Clerk

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

- a) Broadband Project – Cllr. Mayhew reported that this matter was now progressing at ‘build’ stage and suggested it be removed from the agenda as a regular item, unless an urgent matter required discussion. Cllr. Mayhew was thanked for his work on the project.
- b) Ufford Warm Room Project –The Clerk reported that 4 sessions had been booked, and advertised, for the Warm Room project. She agreed to work with Cllrs. Hawthorne and Edworthy over logistics nearer the time.

The concept of the project was discussed and it was agreed that the project should be reviewed at the January meeting. It was felt that people of all ages may attend, along with those simply wishing for social interaction. It was suggested a few newspapers could be purchased, along with the radio playing.

- c) Additional Item – Water Testing – Cllr. Findley reported that the original incubator had now been returned and a full refund received. A new machine had been purchased and was working well. Readings in both pools near Hawkeswade Bridge were still high, despite the recent rain. It was also suggested that the project team could work with other neighbouring villages and Cllr. Findley agreed to explore this.

Action: Cllr. Hawthorne, Edworthy and Findley and the Clerk

10. Placecheck Data Working Party – To discuss suggested actions for all items raised through the Placecheck facility, not related to the Neighbourhood Plan:

A list of proposed actions for each subject had been distributed and a number of them were discussed. There was no objection to pursuing any of them. The Clerk was asked to work through the solutions over the coming months and it was agreed that the actions would be promoted at the Annual Parish Meeting.

Action: Clerk

11. Recreation Ground and Parklands Woods:

- a) To receive the Tree Safety Inspection and to discuss what work should be undertaken – The Tree survey had been circulated to all and Cllr. Hawthorne displayed a map, denoting the locations of the affected trees. It had been estimated that around 28 hours work was required by the Tree Surgeon, this could be reduced to 22 hours if some work was carried out by the Woodland Group. Some of the affected trees were close to paths or the highway, some were further in to the woods but it was noted that people were walking everywhere in the woods at present, due to the time of year.

Councillors commented that the most urgent trees should be looked at first, and any wood taken in lieu of payment for the work, was for mutual benefit, due to the high value of wood at present. It was suggested that Mr Guy Foscett might be contacted to attend a meeting with the tree surgeon as soon as possible, for UPC to benefit from his knowledge about trees, quantity of timber and value of timber. Cllr. Hawthorne agreed to arrange this and report back to the Council.

- b) To discuss quote for providing a Recycling bin on the Recreation Ground – Duplicate of 8. D) above
- c) To discuss reviewing the Rents paid by the Community Hall, Tennis Club and Football Club – It was agreed that these required review, in line with the Licences, and the Clerk was asked to place the matter on the January agenda.
- d) To discuss Visual Play Park Checks in 2023 – Cllrs. Findley, Hawthorne, Edworthy and O'Malley all agreed to continue to carry out the Play Park Visual Inspections. They were requested to complete a report sheet each time an inspection was carried out, or at the very least inform the Clerk of the date of the inspection and any concerning matters, via email. The Clerk agreed to send the report sheet to all.

Action: Clerk and Cllr. Hawthorne

12. Highways/Footpaths:

- a) Speed Indicator Device - To receive report on the Data collected from the SID: The Clerk reported that the SID had now been moved to The Avenue, where it was initially gathering data without showing speeds, with the speed graphics switched on next week. This would allow data to be collected in a 'before and after' way. The Clerk was also asked to thank Mr Barkley for his help with the device and the data analysis.
- b) To discuss if UPC wish to become a 'Co-Signatory' to a letter to ESC produced by Eyke Parish Council (promoted by the Joint Parish Transport Initiative) – Cllr. N Smith explained the remit of the JPTI and the purpose of the draft letter. Councillors made the following comments:
 - The principle of the letter is good but the actual letter itself has a number of formatting **and presentational** issues and it would come across better if re-worked
 - Most parishes in the JPTI have now supported the letter, Cllr. Nicoll has also indicated his support
 - The Local Plan was made in 2020, complaining about the process now is a little too late
 - Although I am not 100% happy with the layout of the letter it can do no harm to support it
 - I understand a meeting with SCC and ESC is planned. If this letter is sent beforehand it may jeopardise that meeting.

In conclusion it was agreed that the Council should write a letter supporting, in principle, the intent of the draft letter but asking to understand how it is going to be used and when it was to be sent, before any agreement could be made to be a joint signatory to it. The Clerk was asked to liaise with Cllrs. V Smith and Findley on this matter.

Action: Clerk

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

The following were reported:

- None

14. Documentation – Review of the following policies/Procedures:

- a) UPC Disciplinary Procedure (Dec 2022) – It was felt that this draft (based on the NALC template) was not appropriate in sections, due to the references to ‘committees’, which Ufford does not have. The Clerk suggested she revise the document and work with Councillors Mayhew, Jones and Findley to agree a revised version, for discussion at the January meeting.
- b) ESC Control of Dogs - Renewal of Public Space Protection Orders – All Councillors were in favour of these orders being renewed for a further three years and the Clerk was asked to write to ESC to inform them of this view.

Action: Clerk

15. To receive agenda items for next meeting and agree date of Next Meeting (17th January 2023):

- Social media presence for UPC
- Disciplinary Policy
- Woods
- Project Plan
- EV Charging Point Review
- Warm Rooms

Action: Clerk

The meeting was closed at 8:59pm

Signed:.....
Cllr. David Findley - Chair

Date:

Judi Hallett
Clerk to Ufford Parish Council

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