

**Minutes of Ufford Parish Council Annual Meeting**

Held on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2023 ~ 7.00pm

The Parish Hall, Church Lane, 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)

Dist. Cllr. Sally Noble

Five members of the public were present

*The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting*

**1. To elect the Chair of the Council for 2023/24 and signing of the 'Declaration of Acceptance of Office'**

The Chair asked for nominations for the role of Chair of the Parish Council. Cllr. Hawthorne proposed Cllr. Findley and he acknowledged he would be willing to take on the role for a further year. There were no other nominations. Cllr. Bennett seconded Cllr. Findley and all were in agreement of his appointment. Cllr. Findley signed the 'Declaration of Acceptance of Office'.

**2. Apologies for absence:**

a) To Receive Apologies:

No apologies for absence had been received.

b) To Accept Apologies:

Not applicable.

**3. To receive any:**

a) Declarations of Pecuniary Interest in Agenda Items

- Cllr. N Smith declared a pecuniary interest in item 5. d) as the owner of the property in question

b) Declarations of Non-Pecuniary Interest in Agenda Items

- None

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*Chair's initials.....*

- 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
  - Cllrs. Mayhew, Findley and Hawthorne declared they had been lobbied over item 5. a)

#### 4. Public Session:

- a) Reports or comment from any member of the public (notes only):
  - Re. DC/22/4985/FUL – We are neighbours of the proposed development and have already written in to ESC but to summarise our objections:
    - i. The plans are very poor and show a property not in keeping with the style of Lodge Road, there are no measurements on the plans and the scale is very difficult to determine
    - ii. The plans are clearly a case of over development of the plot, the property extends well in to the garden which is not in keeping with the other Lodge Road properties and it is very close to 11 Lodge Road
    - iii. The 'Daylight and Sunlight report' show it actually fails the BRE tests; but they then go on to claim an exception and use an alternative BRE approach; 11 Lodge Road has been in situ for many years and this development is in no way 'necessary'; I would urge objection
  - Re. DC/22/4985/FUL – I am a neighbour living opposite and I have also written in to ESC; we fear we will lose light from our property, one of the oldest in the village and that has enjoyed over 350 years of uninterrupted light. The proposed property comes much nearer the High Street than the other properties on Lodge Road and it will affect the Street Scene. It is a very large development on that plot and there are no materials or dimensions on the plans. Are they going to have Solar panels? I would urge you to object to it.
  - Re. DC/22/4985/FUL – I too am a neighbour living opposite and I agree with the previous comments. When the business park at Crown Nursery was being discussed at the ESC Planning Committee the Applicant stated that there was lots of 'Green Space' along the High Street and quoted this plot as one such space so this should not be able to be built on now. It is close to the boundary with the High Street and shows a Velux window which will look into my bedroom window as my house is much lower. How have they been permitted to get away with an 'amendment'; this is a totally different application to the original.

b) Reports or comment from ESC and SCC Councillors (notes only):

- **East Suffolk Council** - Cllr. Noble was welcomed to the meeting as our new District Councillor. She reported that the new administration would officially be formed at the full Council meeting the following day, but that it would be a Green/Liberal/Independent coalition and that she had been appointed to the Planning Committee. There has been training already and the new administration were slowly getting to know the officers. It was hoped that the new administration would encourage greater communication with Parish Councils and Cllr. Noble welcomed the chance to explore the village at a later date.
- **Suffolk County Council** – Cllr. Nicoll was not in attendance (*see item 18. a)*)

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

a) DC/22/4985/FUL - Construction of 1 dwelling at Hungarian Lodge , High Street, Ufford (Revised Plans and re-consultation by ESC). Councillors made the following comments:

- These new plans are very different to the originals and SALC have confirmed we would therefore be correct in discussing them again
- My personal letter has been submitted but in essence my objections to this development are as follows:
  - i. I can't see how this can be an 'amendment', it should have been a whole new application as it is totally different from the original and now the 'Title' is completely incorrect and misleading
  - ii. There will be loss of residential amenity and light to 11 Lodge Road, it is clear why a 'bungalow' is now being proposed but it still fails the light tests and 11 LR is not taking an unreasonable amount of light, as it has been in situ for many years. Ufford has no requirement for development in the Local Plan and therefore the BRE exception they quote in the Light Survey is not applicable
  - iii. This will have an impact on the Street Scene as it is very close to the High Street; yes it is now a bungalow but there are not proper dimensions on the plans; the only measurement was on the garage on the original plans and you have to try to scale it from there
  - iv. It will have an effect on the Listed Buildings close by (The Red House and The Ufford Crown)
  - v. The materials used are not clear, it says 'full render in chalk white' but that is not the same colour or finish as the other properties in LR
  - vi. There are no details of the water drainage system in the application
  - vii. There is no detail of the heating system in the application; will it be 'air source heat pump' which might cause a noise disturbance to the neighbours?

viii. Since changing to a bungalow there is no garage and so no storage, there are no details about cycle storage or bin locations and there is no room to turn on the site so this will be in Lodge Road

- [Residents were asked if they had had contact from the applicant and details of two conversations were provided]
- I suspect a bungalow has been suggested due to the original letters of objection but it is too close to the neighbouring properties. Conversely, it has been placed as far away from the applicant's property as possible.
- It must be acknowledged that this is within the Settlement Boundary
- The results of the Light Survey should be referred to East Suffolk Council to interpret as "...it is considered that there wouldn't be sufficient impact on this window [Window 5] to warrant a reason for refusal..." (quote from the pre-application letter from ESC)
- SCC Highways have commented on access, cycle storage, EV charging point, bin storage and surface water drainage, these issues would need to be addressed or specified as conditions
- Natural England have not been consulted and we should comment on that
- The property could be further away from 11 LR, closer to Hungarian Lodge and this repositioning would alleviate many of the issues
- The Light Survey does not say how it was measured.
- It is important that we comment to ESC that we believe this alteration to the plans should have resulted in a whole new application.
- Conclusion: **Objection** (listing reasons above) (prop: Cllr. Findley, Sec: Cllr. Jones; 9 in Agreement and 1 Against). Clerk to draft letter and distribute for review.

b) DC/23/1495/FUL Make the existing dormer larger and slightly change the first floor layout - Hill House, Ufford Place, Ufford. Councillors made the following comments:

- This creates another bedroom and a slightly wider window
- This is a small alteration
- Conclusion: **No objection** (Prop: Cllr. Bennett, Sec: Cllr. Edworthy all in agreement)

c) DC/23/1737/AME | Non Material Amendment of DC/22/3257/FUL - Erection of single storey extension following demolition of conservatory and previous extension. Demolition of garage. New dormer window to existing roof - Change powder coated aluminium windows to anthracite uPVC, change standing seam zinc to Danosa standing seam single ply membrane and change vertical larch cladding to Pearl Grey Hardie VL Plank horizontal boarding at Vespers, The Avenue, Ufford. Councillors made the following comments:

- Work has already started on this development
- The change to UPVC windows is not ideal but this property is not in the Conservation Area and many neighbouring properties have UPVC windows

- The new style 'boards' will look authentic from a distance
  - Conclusion: It was agreed not to comment on these amendments as the matter was not out for formal consultation
- d) DC/23/1704/FUL | Single storey side extension and alterations at The Orchards, Old Bredfield Road, Ufford. Councillors made the following comments:
- [Cllr. N Smith left the room]
  - This is a very small extension on the side of the house which will not be seen
  - It is in keeping with the rest of the house and just squares off the room
  - Conclusion: **No Objection** (Prop: Cllr. Findley, Sec: Cllr. Mayhew, all in agreement)
  - [Cllr. N Smith re-entered the room]

**Action: Clerk**

**6. To sign Minutes of meeting dated 18<sup>th</sup> April 2023:**

The minutes of the Full Council meeting dated 18<sup>th</sup> April 2023 had been circulated and amendments had been made to the initial draft. The minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr. Hawthorne, seconded by Cllr. Mayhew 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**

**7. To elect the Vice- Chair of the Council for 2023/24 and signing of the 'Declaration of Acceptance of Office':**

Cllr. Findley asked if there were any nominations for Vice-Chair, there were not. Cllrs. N Smith and Mayhew, however, agreed to Chair a meeting if Cllr. Findley was not present. They also agreed to support Cllr. Findley on Planning and Finance matters respectively. This was accepted by all.

**8. To appoint persons to the following offices:**

The following appointments were proposed by Cllr. O'Malley, seconded by Cllr. Edworthy and all were in agreement:

- a) Responsible Finance Officer – The Clerk
- b) Tree Warden – Mr Rob Flory
- c) Footpaths Warden – Ms Rilla Forge
- d) SALC Representative (+ meetings) – Cllr. Ashley O'Malley
- e) Police/ASB Liaison (+ meetings) – Not required, as meetings no longer take place, Clerk will deal with all police matters
- f) Internal Auditor – Mr Trevor Brown
- g) Maintenance Officer – Mr Kevin Coe

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- h) Ufford Community Hall representative – Cllr. Pat Edworthy and Cllr. Vincent Smith
- i) Representative of ESC Community Partnership – Cllr. David Findley
- j) Friends of Parklands Wood representative – Cllr. Jane Hawthorne

**Action: Clerk**

**9. To advise Members to complete their entry on the ESC Register of Interests Website:**

The Clerk reminded all members it was their responsibility to complete their entry in the Register of Members Interests and to review it each year. She offered assistance if Log-on IDs and passwords were required.

**10. To confirm all Standing orders and Direct Debits presently set up for the Council:**

The Clerk confirmed the following financial Standing Order was set up:

- Information Commissioners Office - £35.00 each May

Cllr. Bennett proposed this continue. This was seconded by Cllr. Jones and all were in agreement.

**11. Election:**

- a) To receive notification of the result of the 2023 District Council Election – The Clerk confirmed that Cllr. Sally Noble (Green Party) had been elected as District Councillor for the Wickham Market ward. Cllr. Crocker suggested a letter/card of thanks should be sent to Cllr. Poulter and the Clerk agreed to organise this.
- b) To complete the Declaration of Acceptance of Office Forms for all Ufford Parish Council Members – The Clerk distributed these, they were completed and handed back to the Clerk for filing.
- c) To discuss co-option of a Councillor to the Parish Council – Cllr. Hawthorne suggested a resident of Nicholls Close who may be interested in joining the Council as they had become more involved in the Woodlands Group recently. It was agreed that she should approach them to ask if they were interested.

**Action: Clerk and Cllr. Hawthorne**

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

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

- a) Wickham Market Neighbourhood Plan Additional Consultation – to decide if a formal response is required – It was agreed that as this was a consultation on a technicality, it was not necessary to respond.

- b) To consider making a FOI request to ESC, regarding land formally known as Crown Nursery and if any pre-application advice had been given to the owners on the whole site – It was acknowledged that it had previously been stated by Artisan Planning that there had been no ‘whole site’ pre-application advice given by ESC to them. However, it was also remembered that plans for Phase I, Phase II and Phase III had also been shown to Councillors at an earlier exhibition but these were subsequently denied.

After discussion it was agreed that asking if there had been ‘whole site’ pre-application advice given by ESC was worthwhile and the Clerk agreed to investigate the FOI application process, including a map of the site if possible.

**Action: Clerk**

### 13. Neighbourhood Plan:

- a) To receive an update on the work done by NP Steering Group: As Cllr. N Smith was away from the latest NP Steering Group meeting, Cllr. Jones gave an update. Work on the ‘Views’ and ‘Green Spaces’ was now complete and work to identify the ‘Non-Designated Heritage Assets’ was ongoing, with tasks needing to be divided up. It had been frustrating to be without the guidance of the Consultants for two months but hopefully the funding would be agreed soon (see below).

Cllr. Jones also reported on a meeting with ESC (Adam Nicholl and two colleagues), to discuss speaking with land owners; a report from Mr Nicholl was awaited.

Cllr. N Smith reported on a meeting with the Suffolk Wildlife Trust which had been very useful and, once the Consultants were back on the project, this would be explored further.

- b) To receive an update on funding for 2023/2024 and to discuss if UPC wish to allocate funding for up to 12 hours work of the Consultants (max £540.00) whilst Locality funding is sought: The Clerk confirmed that the Locality website was still not showing that applications for grant funding for NPs was open. Councillors felt frustrated as this was affecting the progress of the Plan. It was acknowledged that any expenditure incurred before a future grant was awarded would not be able to be reclaimed. After discussion Cllr. Findley proposed that £540 was allocated from the recently received CIL funds, to fund up to 12 hours Consultancy fees. This was seconded by Cllr. Mayhew and all were in agreement. Clerk to contact the Consultants.
- c) To review Clerk’s working hours and to discuss when to revert back to 12.5 hours a month: As work on the NP was still continuing, Cllr. Findley proposed that the additional 3 hours per week paid to the Clerk continue for another four months until September, and was then reviewed. This was seconded by Cllr. Bennett and all were in agreement. Clerk to notify SALC.

**Action: Clerk**

**14. Finance Matters:**

- a) To receive and Accounts as of 30<sup>th</sup> April 2023 - The accounts had been distributed and Cllr. Bennett had verified the figures in the accounts. The Clerk confirmed that she would be attending training on the Scribe reporting facility and Cllr. Mayhew suggested a report showing 'Budget, Year to Date comparison', would be useful.
- b) To declare Ufford Parish Council has the Power of Competence and can use it until the next Council Elections – The Clerk explained the concept of the Power of Competence and the benefit for the Council of declaring they had met the criteria to use it. Cllr. Jones proposed the criteria had been met and the Power was confirmed. This was seconded by Cllr. Mayhew and all were in agreement.
- c) To discuss converting the Reserves Account in to a Savings Account (earning interest – The Clerk confirmed that neither of the Lloyds accounts earned any interest. Cllr. Bennett had explored other options, including opening a savings account with Newcastle Building Society, but that the 'Notice Accounts' offered by Lloyds were currently offering 2% interest (on the 32 Days' notice account) and this was competitive. After discussion Cllr. Jones proposed that the 'Reserve' account with Lloyds be converted in to a 32 Day Notice Account. This was seconded by Cllr. Edworthy and all were in agreement. Clerk to speak to Lloyds.
- d) To discuss up to four members of the Friends of Parklands Wood attending a 'Meadow Creation Course' – total cost not exceeding £70.00 - Details of this course were given by Cllr. Hawthorne and it was felt it would be beneficial for both the FPW group and the NP Steering Group. Cllr. O'Malley proposed the expenditure be agreed. This was seconded by Cllr. Edworthy and all were in agreement.
- e) To authorise the following Invoices for Payment:
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|---|---------|
| ii. SCC Pension Fund (Clerk's Pension)          | £237.85 |
| iii. K N Coe (Maintenance)                      | £100.00 |
| iv. Matthew Allen (Felling of dead Elm)         | £240.00 |
| v. D Findley (Water Testing Consumables)        | £34.97  |
| vi. D M Bracey (Annual Play Safety Inspections) | £516.00 |

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

- f) To note Payments made since last meeting:
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| i. J Hallett (Salary and Expenses) | £978.17 |
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g) To note Payments received since last meeting:

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|--|------------|
| i. Astco Recycling (Clothes Bank)      | £27.00     |
| ii. East Suffolk Council (50% Precept) | £11,452.00 |
| iii. Woodbridge Town Football Club     | £100.00    |

**Action: Clerk****15. Project Updates – To receive updates on the following projects:**a) Placecheck Actions – The Clerk reported that there were three actions outstanding:

- Deben unnavigable at Hawkeswade Bridge – It was commented that the Environment Agency used to clear out the waterways every 5 years, but this had not happened for many years and as there was no threat to life from possible flooding, the work was unlikely to happen. A question was asked if it was felt the water quality would improve if the flow improved; this was unknown due to other factors. After discussion it was agreed that advice was needed from the EA on this matter. Clerk to contact the EA and keep item open.
- Foot Bridge at Hawkeswade Bridge – SCC had confirmed that this repair was on their list to carry out would be completed as soon as possible – Clerk to diarise for six months.
- New Slip Road on to A12 – Mr Bradley had forwarded to the Clerk all information he had on this matter. It was suggested the Clerk write formally to SCC Highways, cc Cllr. Nicoll, to request the matter is kept on their radar when any road improvements are considered. Action to be closed.

b) Water Testing of Deben at Hawkeswade Bridge – Cllr. Findley reported that ‘whole Deben Testing’ was now in place, with the water between Debenham and Woodbridge being tested at the same time. Cllr. Findley’s circulated report had requested funding for equipment to test for Phosphates and Nitrates, a cost of approximately £200. It was agreed that Cllr. Noble should be asked if this could be funded from the Enabling Communities budget. Cllr. O’Malley reported that children were still swimming in the water at Hawkeswade Bridge and with Half Term and improved weather conditions imminent, perhaps warnings should be put up. Cllr. Findley agreed to test the water again and then put up the warning signs if the levels of E.coli were high.c) Additional Item – Broadband Project – Cllr. Mayhew reported that the new houses at Goldsmiths had now been approved as being part of the Ufford Broadband Project; work should be concluded in June or July.**Action: Clerk**

**16. Recreation Ground and Parklands Woods:**

- a) To discuss setting up an additional CCTV Camera at the Recreation Ground – The Clerk suggested that this matter was further delayed, until the NP grants were in place, as per the April meeting.
- b) To receive report on new Inventory for trees within Parklands Woods – Cllr. Hawthorne gave outline details of an ongoing project with SCC to record all significant trees and shrubs. Cllr. Hawthorne had also distributed a report, which was acknowledged (two items to be discussed at the June meeting).
- c) To receive update regarding Football on the Recreation Ground – The Clerk reported that the Football Club had paid the annual pitch hire fee and that she was investigating grant funding to improve the pitch from the Football Association. It was also reported that the club would officially start to use the pitch in the new season (August or September).

**Action: Clerk**

**17. Ufford Community Hall:**

- a) To receive report on the Resource Locker break-in and discuss repairs – Cllr. Findley reported vandalism to the Resource Locker at the Recreation Ground. The damage was witnessed and CCTV footage of the vandals had been passed to the Police. It had been estimated by Mr Coe that the repairs would cost in the region of £100 (labour and materials). After discussion, Cllr. Findley agreed to carry out the repairs.

**Action: Cllr Findley**

**18. Highways/Footpaths:**

- a) To receive report on signage at top of The Avenue – The Clerk reported that Cllr. Nicoll had agreed to fund the total cost of the two way arrow sign at the top of the Avenue and installation was awaited. The Clerk was asked to write to thank Cllr. Nicoll.
- b) Additional Item – Potholes along The Avenue – The Clerk was asked to report the large pot holes in the passing place, opposite the entrance to the Recreation Ground, in The Avenue.

**Action: Clerk**

**19. Documentation – To review and adopt:**

- a) Model Councillor Code of Conduct 2020 – The Clerk confirmed that this document was only for review, it had not been amended. All Councillors confirmed they had reviewed the code. The review was proposed as complete by Cllr. O'Malley, seconded by Cllr. Jones and all were in agreement. It was commented that the Model Councillor Code of Conduct spoke of declarations of 'gifts or hospitality' over the value of £50 needing to be declared; where as our agenda mentioned a value if £25. The Clerk agreed to investigate if this should be amended to £50.

*Cllr. Findley proposed that Standing Order 3. x) be suspended in order that the business of the meeting could be concluded. This was seconded by Cllr. O'Malley and all were in agreement*

b) UPC Standing Orders (May 2023) – It was acknowledged that the 'Communications and Publications Policy' that was mentioned in the SOs had not yet been agreed but was on the June agenda for discussion and acceptance. With this caveat, Cllr. Findley proposed the document be adopted. This was seconded by Cllr. N Smith and all were in agreement.

c) UPC Financial Regulations (May 2023) – It was commented that the Council did not use an 'Order Book' and that these words should be redacted. With this caveat, Cllr. Findley proposed the document be adopted. This was seconded by Cllr. N Smith and all were in agreement.

**Action: Clerk**

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

- JPTI – Cllr. N Smith reported that he had had a telephone conversation with the Clerk of Campsea Ashe Parish Council and he had been informed that the JPTI had a meeting planned with Mr Chris Bally (CEO of ESC) on 14<sup>th</sup> June, which Cllr. N Smith hoped to attend.

**21. To receive agenda items for next meeting and agree date of Next Meeting (20<sup>th</sup> June 2023):**

- Communications Policy
- Expenditure in the Woodlands
- Items taken forward

**Action: Clerk**

The meeting was closed at 9.05pm

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

Date: .....

Judi Hallett  
Clerk to Ufford Parish Council

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*Chair's initials.....*