

Minutes of Ufford Parish Council Meeting

Held on 18th July 2023 ~ 7.00pm

The Parish Hall, Church Lane, Ufford

Present

Cllr. David Findley (Chair)

Cllr. Keith Bennett

Cllr. Nick Crocker

Cllr. Pat Edworthy

Cllr. Jane Hawthorne

Cllr. Steve Mayhew

Cllr. Ashley O'Malley

Cllr. Nigel Smith

Cllr. Vincent Smith

Judi Hallett (Clerk)

Cnty. Cllr. Alexander Nicoll

1 member of the public was present

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting

1. Apologies for absence:

a) To Receive Apologies:

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr. Kathryn Jones (family matter). Apologies had also been received from Dist. Cllr. Sally Noble and two members of the public who had hoped to attend.

b) To Accept Apologies:

The apologies of Cllr. Jones were proposed as accepted by Cllr. O'Malley, seconded by Cllr. Mayhew and all were in agreement.

2. To receive any:

a) Declarations of Pecuniary Interest in Agenda Items

- None

b) Declarations of Non-Pecuniary Interest in Agenda Items

- Cllr. V Smith declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 8, as he was the Treasurer of the Community Hall

c) Applications for Dispensation on Agenda Items

- None

d) Declarations of Gifts or Hospitality received over the value of £50.00

- None

Chair's initials.....

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

- Cllr. Findley declared he had been lobbied with reference to item 6. b)

3. Co-option of a Councillor and signing of the 'Declaration of Acceptance of Office' form:

Cllr. Hawthorne confirmed that the gentleman who had attended the June meeting, was interested in joining the Council but not for a couple of years as he was very busy at work and with family. It was agreed that all Councillors should ponder good candidates and refer any ideas to the Clerk in order that she could approach them.

4. Public Session:

a) Reports or comment from any member of the public (notes only):

- Re. DC/22/4985/FUL – [Comment from UPC Tree Warden] I cleared the undergrowth at the base and found no fungal infection; this is a healthy tree. Although , the tree is multi-stemmed (two stems) both stems are in good condition. According to Magic Maps the tree is outside of the curtilage of The Walk, so must be on Highways land. The applicant has no right to cut down this tree. [Clerk – SCC have indicated in writing that they do not have responsibility for the tree]. I will contact ESC to see if they own it, as they do cut the verges. The tree is within the apron of the land previously owned by Ufford Place, so perhaps it used to belong to them. The tree is healthy and has a long life ahead of it. It may need work in the future but it will be missed if it is cut down.

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

- **East Suffolk Council** - Cllr. Noble's report had been circulated. Cllr. Hawthorne asked if it would be possible to circulate some of the articles in Cllr. Noble's report, especially those related to support for families under the Uniform grant scheme. The Clerk agreed to speak to Cllr. Noble to ascertain how these projects were promoted.
- **Suffolk County Council** – Cllr. Nicoll was in attendance and reported on the following matters:
 - Radio Interview with Radio GenX – regarding Social Prescribing for Walking and Cycling, SCC won £1.4m to work with the NHS on this and it must be accessible to all
 - Sizewell C – A group of parishes have got together to talk about dealing with traffic issues relating to Sizewell C. Already issues in Wickham Market. A recent ANPR Police authorised speed camera in Hollesley showed some very surprising results
 - Caroline Page – A sad loss to the Council and the community

- Traffic -the mini-Holland cycle lane project in Woodbridge can be expected to create more traffic through Melton as people avoid Woodbridge town centre. This may have an impact on Ufford too.
- Police – Police often too busy to deal with speeding motorists [Clerk reported that Woodbridge Police station would be closing soon and all officers based at Heath Road, Ipswich]
- EV Charging System – Support given after issue was raised. If further support is needed please let me know.
- Locality Budget – I look at requests individually, pleased to help where I can

Action: Clerk

5. To sign Minutes of meeting dated 20th June 2023:

The minutes of the Full Council meeting dated 20th June 2023 had been circulated and amendments had been made to the initial draft. The minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr. N Smith, seconded by Cllr. Bennett 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

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

- a) DC/23/2423/TPO - ESCC/57/00031 A1 Tree located on communal land close to entrance to Nicholls Close T1 Oak - Reduce east-south-east section of lowest southern limb from 12m radial spread by up to 3 metres at Parklands, Ufford.

Councillors made the following comments:

- Tree Warden has assessed and is happy the work is necessary
- Previous work was carried out but more is needed to save this notable tree
- I believe we should 'support' this application
- Conclusion: **Support** (prop: Cllr. Findley, Sec: Cllr. Mayhew, all in agreement). Clerk to write to ESC.

- b) DC/23/2470/TPO - ESCC/57/00031 - Located on soft dirt banking north end of garden (tree survey from Elite Tree Services) - T1 Sycamore - Fell to ground level at The Walk, Lower Road, Ufford. Councillors made the following comments:

- In one of the original applications on The Walk, a tree survey stated that this tree needed to be cleared of the ivy and re-assessed; the ownership of the tree was also questioned; as far as we know, the ivy was never cleared or the tree re-assessed
- Our Tree Warden has assessed the tree and found no disease and no fungus; the tree is multi stemmed but is sound and will last a good few years yet
- The erosion around the base has been caused by the applicant moving his fence and disturbing the bank

- The ownership of the tree is irrelevant, we need only to comment on the status of the tree
 - Yes, the tree is in the overhead lines but only those branches need trimming
 - The tree is significant to the landscape character of the village and provides a contribution to the ecology of the area.
 - Conclusion: **Objection** (prop: Cllr. Findley, Sec: Cllr. Mayhew, all in agreement). Clerk to write to ESC.
- c) DC/23/2661/FUL - Replacement garage/garden store at Brook House, High Street, Ufford. Councillors made the following comments:
- Looks to be replacing a garage of exactly the same footprint (just slightly higher)
 - I have no objections
 - Conclusion: **No objection** (prop: Cllr. Findley, Sec: Cllr. Bennett, all in agreement). Clerk to write to ESC.

Action: Clerk

7. 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. Cllr. Hawthorne indicated that she had spoken to the new Chair of the ESC Planning Committee (South) and that he had offered to speak to the Parish Council about the general work of the Committee, if requested.

- a) DC/22/4985/FUL – Dwelling at Hungarian Lodge, Lodge Road – To discuss forthcoming ESC Planning Committee (South) Meeting and attendance – Cllr. Findley confirmed that this application would be heard by the ESC Planning Committee (South) on 25th July (2.00pm) After discussion it was agreed that UPC should be present and speak to the Committee. Cllr. N Smith agreed to read a pre-prepared speech and Cllr. Findley agreed to draft it in conjunction with Cllr. N Smith and the Clerk. It was agreed that the speech would concentrate on the position of the proposed bungalow on the plot, loss of light for neighbours, the setting against historic buildings, loss of ecological setting (with lack of consultation with Natural England) and Highways objections.
- b) To discuss Car Boot Sale on the field adjacent to the B1438 at Ufford/Pettistree border – It was reported that there were very few attendees at the first Car Boot Sale but that future sales should be monitored.

Action: Clerk

8. Ufford Community Hall – To discuss new agreement for Plug In Suffolk EV Charging units and early withdrawal of support for the project from SCC:

Cllr. V Smith had circulated details of the withdrawal of support for the EV Charging Units from SCC. A letter had been received in mid-June, stating that the support would be withdrawn by the end of June. This had been followed by a telephone call from an Officer to indicate that SCC were actually still discussing the project support and that a reduced fee for the commercial Anglia Car Charging (ACC) system was being offered.

Cllr. V Smith reported that there had been very few customers using the charger and the service from ACC had been sporadic, with accounts produced at irregular times. Due to the uncertainty of the future pricing policy, the Charging Unit had been switched off. After discussion, Cllr. Mayhew proposed that the Charging Unit should remain switched off, until further information was available from SCC. This was seconded by Cllr. O'Malley and all were in agreement.

9. Neighbourhood Plan:

- a) To receive an update on the work done by NP Steering Group: Cllr. N Smith's monthly report had been circulated and there were no further questions.
- b) To receive an update on funding for 2023/2024 and to request further funds are made available to the project from the CIL funds (£1,500): The Clerk confirmed that the Locality website was *still* not showing that applications for grant funding for NPs was open. Councillors had been sent a request from Cllr. N Smith as Chair of the NP Steering Group to request funding of up to £1,500, from CIL funds, for further work on the project by the Consultants.

After discussion and further explanation of costs, Cllr. Findley proposed that the Council set aside up to £1,500 of CIL funds for further funding of the Consultants for the Neighbourhood Plan. This was seconded by Cllr. V Smith and all were in agreement. The Clerk was asked to notify the Consultants.

It was also agreed that a letter of protest should be written to Dr Therese Coffey MP, indicating the Council's disappointment at the lack of decision with reference to the availability of Locality funding for plans.

Action: Clerk and Cllr. Findley

10. Finance Matters:

- a) To receive and agree Accounts as of 30th June 2023 - The accounts had been distributed and Cllr. Findley agreed to verify the figures in the accounts the following day. The Clerk clarified the figures on the Forecast Report.

- b) To discuss payment to Ufford resident for grass cutting he carries out in Parklands and Parklands Wood – The Clerk reported that a resident of Parklands regularly cuts grass belonging to the Parish Council around the two car parks, and had done for many years. Reimbursements in previous years had been £20.00 (2022/23) and £15.00 (2021/22). Cllr. Mayhew proposed the sum of £25.00 was passed to the resident. This was seconded by Cllr. Bennett and all were in agreement.
- c) To discuss installing a new Dog Bin at Goldsmiths (approx.. £250.00)– The Clerk reported that she had been contacted by 2 residents from Goldsmiths, requesting a dog bin be installed in the close. A suitable location had been identified and the resident living close by had no issues with the proposal. Due to the uncertainty of funding for the Neighbourhood Plan, it was agreed to defer a decision on this matter until the October meeting.
- d) To discuss Chainsaw use courses for two FPW members (full cost tbc) – Cllr. Hawthorne provided final costs for the training sessions for both volunteers; the total cost being £985.00 (+ VAT); plus travel expenses. Due to the uncertainty of funding for the Neighbourhood Plan, it was agreed that the Clerk should request funding for this expense from Cllrs Nicoll and Noble.
- e) To authorise the following Invoices for Payment:
- | | |
|--|---------|
| ii. J Hallett (Salary and Expenses) | £828.12 |
| iii. SCC Pension Fund (Clerk's Pension) | £237.85 |
| iv. HMRC Cumbernauld (Clerk's PAYE) | £265.86 |
| v. SC Norse Ltd (Grass Cutting up to June 2023) | £101.74 |
| vi. K N Coe (Maintenance jobs at Rec) | £150.00 |
| vii. Compass Point Planning and Rural Consultants (NP Stage 3) | £540.00 |

The above payments were proposed by Cllr. Mayhew, seconded by Cllr. Crocker and all were in agreement they be paid. Cllrs. Bennett and Edworthy agreed to authorise the online payments the following day, and viewed the invoices during the meeting.

- f) To note Payments made since last meeting:
- i. None
- g) To note Payments received since last meeting:
- i. None

The Clerk explained that she had spoken to Astco Storage and Textile Company and they had agreed to send the payments for the Clothes Bank annually instead of monthly.

Action: Clerk

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

- a) Water Testing of Deben at Hawkeswade Bridge – Cllr. Findley's report had been circulated. Testing would occur weekly during the School holiday period and notices would be put up if the levels of *e. Coli* were higher than recommended. There had been recent contact with Anglian Water who are establishing a 5 Year Asset Management Plan (AMP) for the Deben. This would take account of the recent decisions for Waldringfield to be given "safe bathing status". In addition, trial tertiary water treatments were ongoing in Southwold using performic acid to kill all bacteria and results were promising; this would be the basis for extending such treatments to the Deben.

The Clerk further advised that she had had contact from the Environment Agency, re. the Council's concerns for the weed in the water at Hawkeswade Bridge. They had agreed to investigate.

12. Recreation Ground and Parklands Woods:

- a) To open discussion on management of the leylandii hedge between the Football pitch and The Avenue – Initial quote for removal = £6,750 (+ VAT) – It was acknowledged that this hedge would need attention in the near future. However, if totally removed it would need something provided in its place to be a screen and protect footpaths and individuals from entering the highway and this would therefore be a very expensive project. The Clerk was asked to 'park' this matter until funding for the NP was established.
- b) To discuss work required to two dead Oak Trees – felling total £1,200 – (within TPO so Planning Permission also required) – Details of the two trees in question were given by Cllr. Hawthorne. Both were very close to pathways and were therefore considered a danger to the public. The Clerk was asked to contact Mr Newton (ESC Landscape and Arboricultural Manager) to ask about the process to reducing to leave as standing dead wood as both trees would be covered by the TPO.
- c) To discuss if UPC wished to take part in the 6th June 2024 National Beacon Lighting project to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the D-Day Landings – After discussion it was agreed that this was probably not best use of public money. However, it was thought that a smaller scale celebration could be organised, to celebrate Ufford's role in the development of Hobart's Funnies which were a key feature in the success of the D-Day landings. The Clerk was asked to place the matter on to the November agenda.
- d) To discuss refreshing the surface of the Boules Court – The Clerk reported that she had been contacted with reference to refreshing the surface of the Boules Court. She had spoken to a local Sand and Gravel company, who had indicated that the cost would be around £250.00. She had agreed to collect a sample of the material and take it to Mrs Fulcher, for her to assess if it was the correct material for the court. She would also accurately measure the court and obtain a definitive cost.

Cllr. V Smith proposed that Standing Order 3. X was suspended to allow the meeting to conclude. This was seconded by Cllr. Hawthorne and all were in agreement.

- e) To discuss the BMX Track within Parklands Wood – Councillors were concerned at the lack of contact from the BMX Track Manager. It was felt that the track was of great benefit to local children but its use was unclear. It was agreed that a site meeting should be arranged and that all should record when they saw the track being used.

Action: Clerk

13. Highways/Footpaths:

- a) To receive quarterly report from Footpaths Warden – The report had been circulated to all and the Clerk was asked to thank the Warden. Cllrs. Findley and Mayhew reported that the Working Group would be cutting back a number of paths later in the week.

Action: Cllr Clerk

14. Documentation – To review and adopt:

- a) Communications Policy (July 2023) – Cllr. Mayhew proposed that draft v.6 was adopted. This was seconded by Cllr. Findley and all were in agreement. The Clerk agreed to finalise and publish.

Action: Clerk

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

- Suffolk Wildlife Trust – Cllr. Hawthorne reported on a course attended regarding Wildflower Meadows. It was agreed that the area around the Jubilee Oak and behind the Community Hall at the Recreation Ground should be left for wild flowers; Clerk to notify East Suffolk Services and Woodbridge Youth Football Club.
- ESC Planning Forum – The Clerk reported on the Planning Forum she attended at High Lodge, Darsham. It had been surprising how many inexperienced Councillors had been in the audience, evident by the very basic questions being asked.

16. To receive agenda items for next meeting and agree date of Next Meeting (21st (sic) September 2023):

- Items taken forward

It was agreed that the next meeting would be on 21st (sic) September, with a meeting taking place in August, only if required by an urgent matter (to be assessed by the Clerk/Chair)

Action: Clerk

The meeting was closed at 9:12pm

Signed:.....

Date:

Cllr. David Findley - Chair

Judi Hallett

Chair's initials.....

Clerk to Ufford Parish Council