

**Minutes of Ufford Parish Council Meeting**

Held on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023 ~ 7.00pm

The Parish Hall, Church Lane, Ufford

Present

Cllr. David Findley (Chair)

Cllr. Keith Bennett

Cllr. Pat Edworthy

Cllr. Kathryn Jones

Cllr. Steve Mayhew

Cllr. Vincent Smith

Judi Hallett (Clerk)

Cnty. Cllr. Alexander Nicoll

Dist. Cllr. Sally Noble

Two members of the public were present

*The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting*

**1. Apologies for absence:**

a) To Receive Apologies:

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr. Nigel Smith (previous engagement) and Cllr. Nick Crocker (unwell). The Clerk notified Council of the resignation of Cllr. O'Malley; ESC had been informed and the appropriate notice would be displayed as soon as it was received. The Chair wished to record his thanks to Cllr. O'Malley for her service to the Council over the previous four years and this was echoed by all.

b) To Accept Apologies:

The apologies of Cllr. N Smith and Cllr. Crocker were proposed as accepted by Cllr. V. Smith, seconded by Cllr. Edworthy 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 7. as the Treasurer for 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

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*Chair's initials.....*

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

- None

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

No member of the public wished to stand for co-option. Due to the lack of candidates coming forward, it was agreed that an informal discussion should be had at the end of the meeting to discuss possible residents to approach.

**4. Public Session:**

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

- Boules Terrain – I would just like to thank the Clerk for her assistance in renewing the surface of the Boules Terrain. We will stop playing soon so this can be sorted out over the winter. (The Clerk agreed to chase the company supplying the material).
- Proposed development at Hungarian Lodge – I would just like to record my thoughts on the ludicrous and unethical way ESC allowed the applicant of the proposed development next to Hungarian Lodge to withdraw the application, AFTER the Planning Committee had made its decision. The site visit and meetings of the Committee are a total waste of money if this action is permitted, after their decision is made. I would also like to record my thanks to the Parish Council for all their work on this matter.

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

- **East Suffolk Council** - Cllr. Noble's report had been circulated and she further reported on the following items:
  - Sizewell C - Meetings attended with EDF, re. Sizewell C and the impact on local villages, especially Wickham Market. They are talking to many local Parish Councils so may want to come to meet Ufford Parish Council
  - Deben Water Quality Testing – Happy to be involved and would like to attend future events [Chair to send details to Cllr. Noble]
  - Hungarian Lodge Application – Good news that the application has been withdrawn, a full explanation of why the 'withdrawal' was permitted had been provided by the Officer, it seems likely that a further application will be made, whilst there is no record of the 'refusal' on the Portal, there are detailed minutes of the meeting that will be published. [The Clerk was asked to place a link to the minutes of the meeting on to the Ufford Parish website, once they were agreed at the next Planning Committee (South) meeting in September]
  - Community Grants – Various grants of money are available, potentially to support development of the Community Hall, we should speak to the Communities Team at ESC for further information

The Chair thanked Cllr. Noble for her assistance with the Hungarian Lodge application and the grants for the Water Testing equipment and the Chain Saw training.

- **Suffolk County Council** – Cllr. Nicoll reported on the following matters:
  - Hungarian Lodge Application – The refusal was good news but there is a massive difference between ‘refusal’ and ‘withdrawal’ in planning terms. I believe there are issues with the Planning Portal that need resolving and I understand these are being addressed
  - Sizewell C – Working Groups looking at the impact of Sizewell C will be established and will monitor how commitments made by EDF are met. These will start with a group in Leiston and will work out to other villages and towns but will not start until the Consent Order is signed
  - JPTI – A meeting was held between ESC (Chris Bally) and all the Parishes concerned with the traffic created by Bentwaters Park (Cllr Nigel Smith attended on behalf of UPC). There is a further workshop planned for November, where Officers of SCC and ESC will be in attendance also
  - Woodbridge and Melton Active Travel Schemes – A £5m grant has been received for this project, but it is £10m short of what was requested, so will only be able to achieve goals in central Woodbridge. I am Chairman one of the Committees but I am disappointed with the mis-information that is going around.
  - *Q – The Cycle Path along the A12 between the two Bredfield junctions is very overgrown* – Please send me the details and I will pass these on to the Cycle Path Team

The Chair thanked Cllr. Nicoll for the grant for the Chain Saw training.

Action: Clerk

## 5. To sign Minutes of meeting dated 18<sup>th</sup> July 2023:

The minutes of the Full Council meeting dated 18<sup>th</sup> July 2023 had been circulated and amendments had been made to the initial draft. An error as to the date of the next meeting was pointed out and the hard copy of the minutes was amended. The minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr. Mayhew, 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

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**6. 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) DC/22/4985/FUL - Construction of 1 dwelling - Hungarian Lodge High Street Ufford – To discuss ESC Planning Committee decision to refuse and subsequent withdrawal of application – Details of how and why this application was allowed to be withdrawn, AFTER the Planning Committee (South) had agreed to refuse the application, had been circulated. It was pointed out that a letter on the Portal (posted 31/08/2023) had appeared to show the Head of Planning and Coastal Management at ESC was informing the Agent that the application had been withdrawn. However, ESC do not have the right to withdraw an application; this can only be instigated by the Applicant or their Agent. Councillors were confused as they assumed the Agent would have been the person instigating the withdrawal. The Clerk was asked to write to Cllr. Kay Yule (Planning Portfolio holder), copying in Cllr. Mark Packard (Chair of the Planning Committee (South)) and Mr Philip Ridley, to clarify precisely who withdrew the Application. It was also agreed that the Planning Portal should be monitored to flag if and when a new planning application came forward.

**Action: Clerk**

**7. Ufford Community Hall – To discuss new agreement for Plug In Suffolk EV Charging units:**

Cllr. V Smith informed Council that no further information had been provided by SCC and that consequently the Chargers remained switched off. The Clerk agreed to place the matter back on the agenda, when further information was available.

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

- a) Deben Water Quality Project – Cllr. Findley's report had been circulated and he expanded on a number of items which included:
- A 16 Location sampling day all along the non-tidal River Deben was held on 24th August with many high phosphate and E.coli results noted
  - ITV Anglia have been in Woodbridge and in the village filming for an article due to be broadcast in the coming days
  - Work with other Councils and Land Owners is expanding
  - Half Day is planned at the University of Suffolk for 17th Oct, with a new DNA sequencing test applied to all results to further determine the sources of e-Coli bacteria
  - Farlingaye High School now involved in E.coli testing through their A-Level Science course and an after-school club

**9. Future Projects List – To review List:**

The Clerk had circulated the Future Projects list earlier in the day but not all Councillors had had time to review it. It was agreed that the list would be re-circulated and that Councillors would be asked to rank each project, in order that a priority list could be established and that could be discussed at the October meeting.

**Action: Clerk**

**10. Clerk's Absence – To discuss cover for Clerks absence:**

The Clerk confirmed that she would be away between 5<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> Oct and that her sister, Ruth Johnson, Clerk to Bucklesham PC, would willingly monitor the emails and forward anything urgent to all. A Zoom call was to be set up to allow the Chair to meet Ruth and a plan for dealing with any urgent planning matters had been established.

**Action: Clerk and Chair**

**11. Finance Matters:**

- a) To receive and agree Accounts as of 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023 - The accounts had been distributed and Cllr. Findley had verified the figures in the bank accounts. The Clerk also reported that she had reverted the accounts back to Excel Spreadsheets. Although she had found the Scribe system very good, for the basic accounting required by UPC, she had not found it quicker and had struggled to get to grips with the reporting facility.

Cllr. Bennett suggested placing further funds in to the Deposit Account and this was agreed. Cllr. Mayhew proposed £15,000 was move immediately. This was seconded by Cllr. Jones and all were in agreement. The Clerk agreed to transfer the funds.

- b) To acknowledge receipt of the Notice of Conclusion of Audit and Section 3 of Part 3 of the 2022/23 AGAR from PKF Littlejohn LLP – The Clerk reported that Section 3 of Part 3 of the 2022/23 AGAR had been returned from PKF Littlejohn LLP; with no comments or recommendations. This had been published on the website, along with the Notice of Conclusion of Audit, which was published in the noticeboard.

- c) To authorise the following Invoices for Payment:

i.	J Hallett (Salary and Expenses)	£998.28
ii.	SCC Pension Fund (Clerk's Pension)	£297.32
iii.	D Findley (50 Phosphate Tests and 100 Syringes)	£51.95
iv.	HMRC Cumbernauld (Clerk's PAYE) – <i>Not to be released until 5/10</i>	£265.86
v.	K N Coe (Maintenance)	£200.00

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

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f) To note Payments made since last meeting:

i. J Hallett (Salary and Expenses)	£829.52
ii. SCC Pension Fund (Clerk's Pension)	£237.85
iii. PKF Littlejohn LLP (External Audit)	£378.00
iv. East Suffolk Council (Election Expenses)	£112.20
v. K N Coe (Maintenance)	£50.00
vi. D Findley (refund on the purchase of Water Testing Equipment)	£226.51

g) To note Payments received since last meeting:

i. East Suffolk Council (Grant for Water Testing Equipment)	£188.76
ii. Suffolk County Council (Grant for Chain Saw Training)	£450.00
iii. UK Power Networks (Wayleave on Poles in Parklands)	£44.33

Action: Clerk

## 12. Recreation Ground and Parklands Woods:

- a) To ratify decision to reduce two Oak Trees in Parklands Wood to a standing stump – Cllr. Mayhew proposed that expenditure up to a maximum of £1,200 had been agreed. This was seconded by Cllr. Findley and all were in agreement. It was acknowledged that Mr Allen had been asked if the felled wood could be sold, in order to reduce the cost to the Council; confirmation of this was awaited but the wood had now been removed.
- b) To discuss the BMX Track within Parklands Wood – The Clerk reported that she had tried to contact Mr Knights on a few occasions over the summer but had not had reply. It was agreed that the Chair would visit Mr Knights to ask if he would attend a meeting with the Clerk and the Chair, to discuss the maintenance work identified by the safety inspector and the future management of the track. The Clerk was also asked to obtain a quote from Mr Coe as to the cost of resolving all the work needed.
- c) To discuss installing a fourth CCTV Camera at the Recreation Ground – After discussion Cllr. V. Smith proposed that a fourth camera be erected, covering the small patio area and EV Charging Points. This was seconded by Cllr. Jones and all were in agreement. The Clerk agreed to check the cost before ordering, proceeding if it was around £250.

Action: Clerk

## 13. Highways/Footpaths:

- a) To discuss purchase of two Dog Bins: one at Goldsmiths and one at the junction of East Lane and Loudham Lane, and comments received from neighbours – The Clerk reported that the cost of installation of a new bin would be £273.27 (+ VAT) but that an annual charge of £91 (+ VAT) per new bin, would also be incurred. Councillors felt that the ongoing annual charge was prohibitive and that those who requested the new bins should be informed and notified of where the nearest bin to them was.

- b) To discuss the 'Love Woodbridge and Melton project' and the proposed 65 new dwellings at Eyke and their impact on Ufford – Cllr. V Smith reported that he had attended an open meeting regarding the 'Love Woodbridge and Melton project' and was personally concerned at some of the proposals, including a Dutch Style Box Junction alluded to at the Melton Crossroads. Two documents currently being consulted on were discussed and Cllr. V Smith offered to attend any future meetings, in order to report back to the Parish Council; this was accepted. It was acknowledged that the proposed development of 65 dwellings in Eyke, if permitted, would further add to the traffic issues at the Melton Crossroads and Rail Crossing.

Action: Cllr Clerk and Cllr. V Smith

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

- a) Asset Register (September 2023) – A small spelling error was pointed out and the Clerk confirmed this would be corrected. Cllr. Findley proposed that the draft document adopted. This was seconded by Cllr. Mayhew 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:**

- Climate Change and Green Infrastructure Workshop – A report on this workshop had been circulated by Cllr. Findley and he further expanded on the session with details of how the work will continue.

**16. To receive agenda items for next meeting and agree date of Next Meeting (31<sup>st</sup> October 2023):**

- Items taken forward

Action: Clerk

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**Exclusion of the press and public from this item by virtue of Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 s1 (2) because of the confidential nature of the matter to be discussed**

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**17. Neighbourhood Plan:**

- a) To receive an update on the work done by NP Steering Group and the progress of the Draft Plan: Cllrs. Findley and Mayhew updated the Council on the work of the NP Steering Group.
- b) To discuss Clerks hours on the NP and whether to continue to pay an additional 3 per week: After discussion it was agreed to continue to pay the Clerk three additional hours per week, to work on the NP project. This was proposed by Cllr. Bennett, seconded by Cllr. Jones and all were in agreement. The Clerk was asked to place the matter on the January 2024 agenda for review.

Action: Clerk and NP Steering Group Members

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The meeting was closed at 8.57pm

Signed:.....

Date: .....

Cllr. David Findley - Chair

Judi Hallett

Clerk to Ufford Parish Council

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