

## **Minutes of Ufford Parish Council Meeting**

Held on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023 ~ 7.00pm

The Community Hall, The Avenue, Ufford

### **Present**

Cllr. David Findley (Chair)

Cllr. Keith Bennett

Cllr. Nick Crocker

Cllr. Pat Edworthy

Cllr. Jane Hawthorne

Cllr. Steve Mayhew

Cllr. Nigel Smith

Cllr. Vincent Smith

Judi Hallett (Clerk)

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. Kathryn Jones (Away). County Cllr. Alexander Nicoll and District Cllr. Sally Noble had also sent their apologies. Cllr. Findley explained the enormous amount of work that Cllr. Noble had been undertaking linked to the recent flooding and impending storm.

#### **b) To Accept Apologies:**

The apologies of Cllr. Jones were proposed as accepted by Cllr. V Smith, 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**

- None

#### **c) Applications for Dispensation on Agenda Items**

- None

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

- None

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

- None

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*Chair's initials.....*

**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 (notes only):**

- **East Suffolk Council** - Cllr. Noble had been in daily contact with Cllr. Findley regarding the recent flooding and impending storm and she had attended residents in Ufford to assist and offered all residents advice via email.
- **Suffolk County Council** – Cllr. Nicoll had sent his apologies.

**4. To sign Minutes of meeting dated 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2023:**

The minutes of the Full Council meeting dated 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2023 had been circulated and amendments had been made to the initial draft. The minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr. Edworthy, seconded by Cllr. V. Smith 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. Cllr. V Smith requested a note be placed on the record of the correspondence the Parish Council had had, with the East Suffolk planning officers, in conjunction with the proposed development at Hungarian Lodge, and that if the matter went to the Planning Committee (South), the correspondence should be forwarded to the Committee Chair.

**Action: Clerk**

**5. To discuss and agree responses to the following Planning Applications:****a) DC/23/4047/CON - Consultation - Install an underground chamber with ducting, and an OLT (cabinet) within the grass verge - Ufford Depot, Yarmouth Road, Ufford.**

Councillors made the following comments:

- This is more clutter on our green spaces in the village. We have not been formally consulted but I feel we should write
- There are no sizes or dimensions on the drawings
- I have a concern over the scale of these cabinets
- Conclusion: **Write with concerns above** (prop: Cllr. Findley, Sec: Cllr. Bennett, all in agreement). Clerk to write to ESC.

**b) DC/23/4073/CON - Consultation - Install above ground cabinets (in order to house electronic equipment) - 1 Redwood Terraces, Parklands, Ufford. Councillors made the following comments:**

- As above, why are two cabinets required so close to each other?
- What services will these provide and who will they serve?
- Conclusion: **Write with concerns above** (prop: Cllr. Findley, Sec: Cllr. Bennett, all in agreement). Clerk to write to ESC.

**Action: Clerk**

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*Chair's initials.....*

**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.

Three other matters were discussed:

- DC/23/3492/FUL - Construction of 1 dwelling - Hungarian Lodge High Street Ufford – The Clerk confirmed that this application was still ‘pending decision’.
- Appeal Ref: APP/X3540/W/22/3311875 (Land At Victoria Mill Road, Framlingham) – Cllr. Jones had circulated details on this Appeal, which had been dismissed. It was commented that the Inspector had quoted from Framlingham’s Neighbourhood Plan.
- Road Closures to Facilitate Broadband Cabling input – Cllr. V Smith reported that the establishment of the new Fibre Broadband cables in Spring Lane (Loudham Lane end) was going to require a whole road closure. He asked if SCC should be made aware of this disruption to residents and asked to co-ordinate the closures. Cllr. Mayhew responded that only a few roads were still left to receive the upgrade and so he felt very little disruption was to come.

**7. 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 this, to include:
  - An article had appeared on ‘Suffolk News’ website, with details and images of the recent samples taken following Storm Babet.
  - Regular water sampling and testing by the volunteer group continues
- b) Sogenhoe Chapel Field Walk - Cllr. Findley’s report had been circulated and he expanded on this, to include:
  - 13 Volunteers had taken part in the recent Field Walk. It had been very wet but some items were found and are now being analysed.
  - Nicky Moxey from Suffolk Archaeological Field Group will be back in contact with Cllr. Findley when the ground dries and the field walk can continue

**8. Future Projects List – To review List and confirm ranking:**

The Clerk had circulated the revised Future Projects List (Oct 2023) having received votes from members. The top six items were discussed and the following was agreed:

- Community Hall Refurbishment – Hall Trustees to obtain quotes for the refurbishment of the toilets and kitchen and then supply these to the Clerk so that a funding plan can be established

- Provision of Burial Ground – Dependent on land becoming available and may be covered by the Neighbourhood Plan. On hold until the NP is established
- Provision of Allotments - Dependent on land becoming available and may be covered by the Neighbourhood Plan. On hold until the NP is established
- Replacement of Leylandii Hedge alongside The Avenue – Cost just to remove the hedge circa £7k – on hold until funding required for Community Hall known
- Provision of Recycling Bin at Recreation Ground – Clerk to include this in the 2024/25 Budget with a view to requesting grant from ESC
- Replacement of Notice Board at Parklands - Clerk to include this in the 2024/25 Budget with a view to requesting grant from SCC

The Clerk was asked to contact Melton PC to obtain information on the management of their new Public Toilet and the costs. It was noted that any changes to the amenities at the Community Hall would require the agreement of the UCH trustees and committee as lessees of the Hall from the Parish Council. All other items to remain on the list.

**Action: Cllrs. V Smith and Edworthy and Clerk**

#### **9. Recreation Ground and Parklands Woods:**

- a) To receive update on the BMX Track within Parklands Wood – Cllr. Findley and the Clerk reported that they had met with two representatives of the Redwood Trails BMX Club, and they had agreed to carry out the work as listed by Mr Bracey. See item 10. b).
- b) To discuss transfer of funds to Woodlands Group account for consumables – After discussion it was agreed to transfer £200 to the Friends of Parklands Wood, to allow them to purchase consumables such as oil, fuel and gloves. This item was proposed by Cllr. Findley, seconded by Cllr. Crocker and all were in agreement.
- c) To discuss report from Cllr. Hawthorne on Chain Saw Training and purchase of new tools and equipment – Cllr. Hawthorne detailed the very frustrating time she had had in trying to organise the Chain Saw training and suitable safety equipment. She commented that the group would never use that training provider again but that she had persuaded the trainer to carry out the training in Parklands Wood, which would save on travel expenses and work for the Tree Surgeon in the near future. She also confirmed that the correct PPE was being purchased, with the best prices sought and discounts requested.

**Action: Clerk**

**10. Finance Matters:**

- a) To receive and agree Accounts as of 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023 - The accounts had been distributed and Cllr. Hawthorne had been asked to verify the figures in the bank accounts. The Clerk also ran through the proposed Budget timetable.
- b) To discuss the quote for the BMX Track Sign (£105.00 + VAT) – The Clerk reported that two of the BMX Club organisers had agreed to have their telephone numbers on the sign. After discussion, Cllr. Mayhew proposed the sign was purchased. This was seconded by Cllr. Bennett and all were in agreement.
- c) To discuss quote to replenish the Boules Terrain (£394.70 + VAT minus contribution from Boules Club of £160.00) – After discussion it was agreed that this material could be purchased, but that delivery should be in the spring of 2024, when the ground was firmer. This was proposed by Cllr. Mayhew, seconded by Cllr. N Smith and all were in agreement.
- d) To ratify decision to spend on three Woodlands Projects and additional safety equipment required for the Chain Saw Course (£320.00) – Cllr. Hawthorne reported that she did not have all the final figures with her and she was asked to report back to the November meeting. It was proposed by Cllr. V Smith that costs should not exceed £350.00. This was seconded by Cllr. Crocker and all were in agreement.
- e) To authorise the following Invoices for Payment:
  - i. R Forge (Fuel for Footpaths Cutting Equipment) £9.30
  - ii. D Findley (Phosphate Tests – 25 + 50 e-coli plates) £140.29
  - iii. SALC (6 Months’ Payroll Provision and Clerk’s attendance at Conf) £75.60
  - iv. Ufford Community Hall (Hall Hire for 7 meetings) £140.00
  - v. Matthew Allen (Reducing of 2 dead Oak Trees) £1,080.00
  - vi. Friends of Parklands Wood (Consumables) £200.00
  - vii. K Rogers (Grant for Travel Costs) £100.00
  - viii. Thurlow Nunn Standen Ltd (Oil and Gloves) £14.26

The above payments were proposed by Cllr. Edworthy, seconded by Cllr. Mayhew and all were in agreement they be paid. Cllrs. Mayhew and Bennett 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. J Hallett (Salary and Expenses) £834.57
  - ii. SCC Pension Fund (Clerk’s Pension) £237.85
- g) To note Payments received since last meeting:
  - i. ESC (CIL Payment) £976.93

**Action: Clerk**

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*Chair’s initials.....*

**11. Highways/Footpaths:**

- a) To discuss Cllr. N Smith's attendance at the Joint Parishes Transport Initiative workshop on 15th November – Cllr. N Smith recalled the history and purpose of this initiative and the details of recent meetings with Chris Bally (new CEO of ESC). He confirmed that he would be willing to attend this workshop and would report back to the next meeting.

It was noted that recent flooding in Suffolk could have been heightened by housing development and the loss of green spaces; Cllr. N Smith was asked to raise this at the meeting.

It was further commented that recent meetings of the 'Love Woodbridge and Melton' campaign had been cancelled due to fear the venue would be too small for the number of expected attendees; this being predicted to be high due to the number of concerns held by local people on proposed changes to highway management in the area.

- b) To receive report on recent flooding in the parish – A report produced by Cllr. Findley had been circulated but he asked that it not be distributed further as some information required further investigation. Five houses on the High Street had been severely affected by Storm Babet, with all needing extensive repair. It was thought that some of the issues had resulted from the part blockage of the Byng Brook culvert under the High Street, by debris washed down stream.

A further issue of a broken sewage pipe had been reported on the old Crown Nursery site and this had affected properties in The Oaks. This was being managed by Anglian Water and Landex, although residents were frustrated at the slow progress. A map of the sewer pipes in the village was circulated.

Cllr. Findley emphasised how important it was to report all flooding incidents., It was noted that where 5 properties or more had been affected then an investigation would be carried out by SCC. It was suggested that a note be placed in our next PUNCH article, reminding riparian owners of land next to water courses of their responsibilities. Cllr. Findley also reported that ESC would be encouraging all parishes to establish an Emergency Plan and asked for this to be placed on to the November agenda.

It was suggested that recent work on the water meadows alongside Byng Brook appeared to have straightened some of the channels and this had allowed the water to flow very quickly. Cllr. Findley agreed to speak to Mr Fleming to enquire if these could be altered to be more meandering, or at least, at a minimum, for work to be undertaken to level the channel's raised banks, caused by previous dredging, thus enabling flood waters to seep across the whole meadow. Finally, Cllr. Findley asked for a letter of thanks be sent to Cllr. Noble who had been working very long hours to assist residents in her ward.

**Action: Cllr. Findley and Clerk**

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

- Community Partnership Meeting (Cllr. Findley) – Cllr. Findley reported that he had attended the last CP meeting, with around 7 or 8 other parishes. The details of this meeting had been included in District Cllr. Sally Noble’s September report which had been circulated.
- CP Bio Diversity Group (Cllr. Findley) – Cllr. Findley had also reported on the first meeting of the Bio-Diversity Group, part of the Community Partnership. Each parish would be asked to nominate a representative and it was agreed that this should go in to the January PUNCH. In addition, the Clerk reported that she had collected the 500 Narcissus bulbs from ESS early in the day, and these would be distributed with an announcement via the PUNCHLine.

**Action: Clerk**

**13. To acknowledge work of locum Clerk, Mrs Johnson:**

Councillors were very grateful for the work undertaken by Mrs Johnson and Cllr. Findley agreed to write a ‘Thank you’ email to her.

**Action: Cllr. Findley**

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

- Items taken forward
- Budget 2024/25
- Grant Requests
- Project List
- Emergency Plan

Cllr. Hawthorne suggested an item regarding requesting a Bus Stop at the junction of High Street and Spring Lane be placed on the agenda. Others felt there was already a stop there and the Clerk was asked to investigate and ask for better signage.

**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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**15. Neighbourhood Plan:**

- a) To receive an update on the work done by NP Steering Group and the progress of the Draft Plan: Cllr. N Smith updated the Council on the recent work of the Steering Group. It was commented that an article would appear in the November PUNCH and three further articles were planned for January, February and March 2024. Cllr. Findley requested thanks be sent to all Steering Group members and the Consultants, for their continued work.

**Action: Clerk and NP Steering Group Members**

The meeting was closed at 9.08pm

Signed:.....

Cllr. David Findley - Chair

Date: .....

Judi Hallett

Clerk to Ufford Parish Council

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Chair's initials.....