

Minutes of Ufford Parish Council Meeting

Held on 21st November 2023 ~ 7.00pm

The Community Hall, The Avenue, Ufford

Present

Cllr. David Findley (Chair)
Cllr. Nick Crocker
Cllr. Kathryn Jones
Cllr. Vincent Smith

Cllr. Keith Bennett
Cllr. Pat Edworthy
Cllr. Steve Mayhew

Cllr. Tim Buxbaum (*after 3*)
Cllr. Jane Hawthorne
Cllr. Nigel Smith

Judi Hallett (Clerk)

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:

No apologies for absence had been received from Parish Councillors. County Cllr. Alexander Nicoll had sent his apologies.

b) To Accept Apologies:

Not applicable.

2. To receive any:

a) Declarations of Pecuniary Interest in Agenda Items

- Cllr. Findley – Item 10. e) –Receiving remittance for expenditure

b) Declarations of Non-Pecuniary Interest in Agenda Items

- Cllr. V Smith – Item 8 – Treasurer of the Community Hall
- Cllr. Edworthy - Item 8 – Trustee of the Community Hall
- Cllr. Edworthy - Item 10. b) – Organiser of the Coffee Mornings
- Cllr. Hawthorne - Item 10. b) – Organiser of the Coffee Mornings

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

- None

3. To receive nominations for Co-option of a Councillor (2 vacancies) and to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office:

Cllr. Findley reported that Mr Tim Buxbaum had indicated an interest in joining the Council. He is a local architect with many years residency and experience in planning matters. Cllr. Findley proposed Mr Buxbaum's co-option. This was seconded by Cllr. Bennett and all were in agreement.

Cllr. Buxbaum joined the meeting and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office form.

Action: Clerk

4. Public Session:

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

- DC/23/3492/FUL – The planners are clearly not listening to us, this proposed bungalow is not needed, there are other houses for sale and Policies SCLP 11.2 and 11.1 are not satisfied, Properties will be overlooked, the Daylight/Sunlight reports are confusing, the landowner claims it fits in but it does not, I have placed an extension on my property but I had to keep all original features, the materials are still not known, listed buildings are close and it will affect the street scene for them, this is over development of the plot and the hard landscaping will cause flooding.
- DC/23/3492/FUL – I agree with all comments above. In addition the recent flooding at Crown Nursery/The Oaks shows what hard landscaping can do. Also, this garden was quoted in the application to build the Business Huib as a local green space, it cannot now be taken away. Nice trees will also require felling; ESC needs to look at the cumulative effect of the permissions granted in Ufford.

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

- **East Suffolk Council** - Cllr. Noble reported on the following items:
 - DC/23/3492/FUL – Will any neighbour and the PC speak? [it was hoped so], I will attend and will speak on your behalf. Please check the order in which the cases will be heard, as the Agenda is very full
 - A full report will be issued next month
 - Flooding – Still assisting residents, support is available but it is not as easy to get hold of as some politicians are claiming [Thank you for all your help]
 - Emergency Plan – I am attending 'Rest Room' training next week and will pass this down to you. It would be a good idea to have an Emergency Plan

- **Suffolk County Council** – Cllr. Nicoll had sent his apologies.

5. To sign Minutes of meeting dated 31st October 2023:

The minutes of the Full Council meeting dated 31st October 2023 had been circulated and amendments had been made to the initial draft. The minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr. Findley, 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

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

a) DC/23/3492/FUL | Construction of 1 dwelling at Hungarian Lodge, High Street, Ufford. Councillors made the following comments:

- The re-consultation is due to additional documents being posted on to the Portal
- There is a procedural issue here. The closing date for comments is now showing as 27th November, and yet the application is on the Planning Committee (South) agenda for 28th November and the papers for that have already been issued. Surely this means that any comments sent in now will not be taken in to consideration by the Officer and are unlikely to be seen by the Committee if they go in as late as 27th November.
- The materials are known but the colour does not match what is there already; the plans indicate a white render whereas nearby properties are cream/ off-white
- At 6.14 the Officer states that the new plans have 'improved' the light into 11 Lodge Road but she does not say this is now acceptable
- I think we should repeat our original comments with additional comment about the procedural issue
- The Chimney is now shown as 'for decoration only' but is shown on two different locations on the plans
- There is no information about the heating, if this is to be a heat pump where will it be situated and will it cause a noise disturbance to any neighbours?
- The ESC Ecology Officer has stated that a contribution to the RAMS scheme is required before the application is determined, but there is no evidence of this having happened on the Portal
- Has an independent person studied the Day/Sun Light report?
- [Cllr. Findley advised that he could speak at the Planning Comm. Meeting.]
- **Conclusion: Continuing Objection** – Letter to repeat previous concerns, add in concern about RAMS contribution and state concerns for the above procedural issue (Prop: Cllr. Crocker, Sec: Cllr. N Smith, 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.

Further matter:

a) Draft letter composed by Ufford resident re drainage at the former Crown Nursery

– This had been circulated and the following comments were noted:

- The recent floods at Crown Nursery were due to the exceptional amount of rain that fell in a very short period and a small sewage leak. Landex were on site swiftly and have appeared to put in much time and effort in-to resolving the issue
- Flooding in School Lane is an historic issue and properties in front of Butts Meadow have been flooded in the past
- The water was tested near the outflow pipe into Byng Brook for *e-Coli*, it was found to be 130 colonies per 1 ml (milliliter); 9 x the maximum safe level stipulated by the Environment Agency. More recently this has reduced to 3 colonies per 1 ml.
- Anglian Water pumped out lots of water and have fixed the sewage pipe issue
- Rachel Smith is aware of this issue but do we know if the Flood Management Plan is in place and if it is sufficient to safeguard houses in the School Lane area? Who should be monitoring these pipes for blockages?
- **Conclusion** – Clerk to write to Rachel Smith (ESC Planning) to ask if the Flood Management Plan is in place, if it is sufficient to safeguard houses in the School Lane area and who should be monitoring the pipes for blockages.

Action: Clerk

8. Projects List:

- a) To receive update on potential costs for refurbishing the Community Hall Toilets and Kitchen: - Cllr. Edworthy reported that it had proven very hard to get a quote for the refurbishment of the toilets and the kitchen in the hall. One quote had been received but was very high and other builders had not submitted their quotes. Cllr. Edworthy agreed to work with Cllr. Buxbaum to assess the work required
- b) To discuss building/providing a Public Toilet at the Community Hall, considering information received from Melton PC: - details of the cost of running the new public toilet in Melton had been received from the Melton Clerk and circulated. Cllr. V Smith reported that the Hall Committee had not discussed the matter as yet.

After discussion it was concluded that the cost of altering the present 'Accessible Toilet' would be high and the cost of the annual cleaning and maintenance would be over 5% of the Council's Precept. It was agreed that this element of the Community Hall project would not be taken forward.

Action: Cllrs Edworthy and Buxbaum

9. Emergency Plan – To discuss establishing an Emergency Plan:

The Clerk had circulated links to two comprehensive Emergency Plans and the Basic Plan as adopted by Hollesley parish. Discussion was had on the likely emergencies to affect Ufford: Power cut, flooding and high winds causing multiple trees to fall. It was commented that likely 'Rest Rooms' would be either of the two Halls, however, both suffered from flooding issues on land/roads close to them.

Cllrs. Bennett and Hawthorne agreed to investigate the matter outside of the meeting and report back at the December meeting. The Clerk agreed to forward the latest Plan template to all.

Action Cllrs Bennett and Hawthorne and the Clerk

10. Finance Matters:

- a) To receive and agree Accounts as of 31st October 2023 - The accounts had been distributed and Cllr. Bennett had verified the figures in the bank accounts. There were no questions.
- b) To discuss Grant Requests for April 2024 payment – After discussion the following grants were agreed:
 - St Mary's Church Flowers - £300
 - Ufford Community Hall (for Coffee Mornings) - £100.00

These payments were proposed by Cllr. Bennett, seconded by Cllr. N Smith with 8 votes 'for' and 2 abstentions. The Clerk was asked to notify all applicants and diarise payments for April 2024.

- c) To discuss the draft Budget for 2024/25 and the suggested Precept request – The Clerk reported that the Finance Councillors had debated the original draft budget and made some suggested amendments; this amended draft had been forwarded to all. Each line of the re-drafted budget was explained and discussed, with alterations suggested and debated. The Clerk agreed to adjust the draft and re-circulate for further discussion and agreement at the December meeting.

In order to balance the budget the Clerk and Finance Councillors had made a recommendation for a 5% rise in the Precept, to £23,821. Councillors debated the impact of this and the requirement to ensure the Council's Assets, such as the Woodlands and Community Hall, were maintained for all residents. It was agreed that the final decision would be made at the December meeting.

- d) To ratify decision to implement new Pay Scale for Clerk, as from 1st April 2023 – The Clerk reported that the LGA had recommended her Pay Scale (SCP 17) be raised to £14.95 from 1st April 2023. Cllr. Bennett proposed this be accepted, this was seconded by Cllr. Edworthy and all were in agreement; Clerk to notify SALC.

- e) To authorise the following Invoices for Payment:

i. J Hallett (Salary and Expenses)	£998.48
ii. SCC Pension Fund (Clerk's Pension)	£297.32
iii. STC Solutions Ltd (CCTV Camera at Community Hall)	£524.40
iv. K N Coe (Maintenance)	£100.00
v. Hirst Signs Ltd (BMX Sign)	£150.00
vi. Thurlow Nunn Standen (items for Woods Group)	£298.04
vii. D Findley (Water Testing Consumables)	£35.98
viii. St Mary's Church Hall, Ufford (Hall Hire)	£116.00

The above payments were proposed by Cllr. Jones, seconded by Cllr. Edworthy and all were in agreement they be paid. Cllrs. Hawthorne and Findley agreed to authorise the online payments the following day, and viewed the invoices during the meeting
[For the record, Cllr. Mayhew authorised the payments alongside Cllr. Hawthorne]

- f) To note Payments made since last meeting:

i. Mr J Mutton (Safety Boots x 2)	£139.98
-----------------------------------	---------

- g) To note Payments received since last meeting:

i. Mrs D Fulcher (Contribution from Boules Club)	£160.00
--	---------

Action: Clerk

11. Highways/Footpaths:

- a) To receive Quarterly Footpath Report – The latest Footpath report from Ms Forge had been circulated. Cllr. Findley reported that little work had been carried out recently, due to the wet weather, but some cutting back of hedges was planned. Cllr. Hawthorne reported that she had received a complaint about the pavement between Ufford Place and The Avenue. As this was not a PROW, but a 'Pavement', it was suggested the complainant report the matter directly to SCC.

- b) Update on recent accident at Ufford Triangle – Cllr. Findley gave details of a recent accident at the Ufford Triangle where a cyclist had hit a car that pulled out in front of him. It was felt the accident was driver error, and not linked to the confusing road markings. However, SCC Highways had again written to Cllr. Nicoll to confirm they had no funds to alter the junction and that all road markings and signage was clear.

12. Documentation – To discuss the Healthy Environments and Rural Development Supplementary Planning Documents (Draft) from East Suffolk Council

These documents had been circulated to all. Cllr. Findley reported that two members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group were interested in the draft papers and had agreed to study them with a view to offering an opinion on possible comment.

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

- JPTI Meeting (Cllr. N Smith) – Cllr. N Smith had previously circulated a report, compiled by Mr Fortman, regarding this workshop. It had been interesting and Mr Chris Balley (ESC CEO) was enthusiastic to take suggestions forward. It was envisaged there would be a follow up session.
- Home Energy Conference (Cllr. Hawthorne) – This had proved very interesting and a number of initiatives had been passed to the Clerk for distribution.

14. To discuss if Ufford wish to take part in any celebrations of the 80th Anniversary of the D-Day Landings, in June 2024:

Details of a plan to light beacons on 6th June 2024 had been circulated by SALC. It was felt the village did not have suitable visible high ground to have an effective ‘beacon’ but the role of the Hobart’s Funnies had been critical in the D-Day landings and it would be good to celebrate these. It was agreed that a PUNCHLine should be released asking if anyone was interested in planning a celebration.

Action: Clerk

Cllr. V Smith proposed that Standing Order 3. x) was suspended in order to finish the business of the meeting. This was seconded by Cllr. Bennett and all were in agreement.

15. To receive agenda items for next meeting and agree date of Next Meeting (19th December 2023):

- Budget 2024/25
- Precept Request for 2024/25
- Project List
- Emergency Plan
- Dates for 2024 meetings

Action: Clerk

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

16. 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, detailed the plan for the year and the type of communications that would be issued.

Action: Clerk and NP Steering Group Members

The meeting was closed at 9.19pm

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

Date:

Judi Hallett
Clerk to Ufford Parish Council

Chair's initials.....