

Minutes of Ufford Parish Council MeetingHeld on 20th February 2024 ~ 7.00pm

The Community Hall, The Avenue, Ufford

Present

Cllr. David Findley (Chair)

Cllr. Nick Crocker

Cllr. Nigel Smith

Cllr. Keith Bennett

Cllr. Jane Hawthorne

Cllr. Vincent Smith

Cllr. Tim Buxbaum

Cllr. Kathryn Jones

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. Pat Edworthy (Away). District Councillor Sally Noble had also sent her apologies. No correspondence had been received from County Councillor Alexander Nicoll.

b) To Accept Apologies:

The apologies from Cllr. Edworthy were proposed as accepted by Cllr. V Smith, seconded by Cllr. Bennett and all were in agreement.

2. To receive any:a) Declarations of Pecuniary Interest in Agenda Items

- Cllr. Findley – Item 1. e) iii. – Recipient of a refund of Water Testing consumables

b) Declarations of Non-Pecuniary Interest in Agenda Items

- Cllr. V Smith – Item 9 – 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

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

- None

Chair's initials.....

3. Public Session:

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

- DC/24/0127/FUL – As the owner of this property I am only here to hear the Council's discussion on this item. For background, the work is required due to the property requiring a new roof and we are taking the opportunity to have other work carried out. Q. *What is the percentage increase of floor space?* Less than 10%.

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

- **East Suffolk Council** - Cllr. Noble's report had been circulated earlier in the month
- **Suffolk County Council** – Cllr. Nicoll was not in attendance.

4. To sign Minutes of meeting dated 16th January 2024:

The minutes of the Full Council meeting dated 16th January 2024 had been circulated and there were no further amendments. The minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr. N. Smith, seconded by Cllr. Hawthorne 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

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

Cllr. Findley proposed a motion to allow a member of the Steering Group in the audience, to stay in the room, in order that a non-Councillor could be present to answer any questions. This was seconded by Cllr. Bennet and all were in agreement. Mr Edward Creswick participated in item 5.

5. Neighbourhood Plan:

a) To discuss the Pre-Submission Draft Plan – Cllr. Findley outlined the process that the Plan would follow, should the Council approve that it went out for Consultation and assured the Council that all suggested amendments made to date would be included in the Plan. The following comments were made:

- Q. *How will the Consultation be advertised?* In a number of ways: Ufford PUNCH Magazine (article and Flyer), large posters, PUNCHLine (on numerous occasions), HUG Facebook Page, Next_Door_Ufford, Ufford Website, copies in the Church and Community Hall, Press Release, posters in the Pubs, and most importantly, Word of mouth; please will all Councillors speak to your neighbours about attending.

Chair's initials.....

- The Clerk also confirmed that all the residents who had joined Initial Launch Meeting as “foot soldiers”, and took part in Character Appraisal work and also assisted with circulation of the Village Survey, would be invited to attend the Exhibition.
- Could additional Flyers be printed and perhaps taken to properties where engagement with residents has been difficult in the past? *It was agreed to ask for 100 additional Flyers for this purpose.*
- If there is a General Election anytime within the Consultation period, will that delay things? *We do not believe so, because the consultation period has already been extended beyond the statutory 6 weeks due to Easter and Bank Holidays.*
- I would like it recorded that we do not have any document in front of us that we are voting on. We have an earlier draft document that we are assured will be amended as we have instructed but I think we should have had the amended document in the form which will be published before we approve it going out to consultation. *This is acknowledged. However we have been working with our Consultants for two years now and we trust them implicitly. It is also worth noting that the Pre-Submission Plan will be amended significantly after the Consultation so this is not the last time you can make comment/suggestions.*
- Following the Reg 14 Consultation I understand the Plan will be revised and will then go to ESC (under Regulation 15). Please can we be assured firstly that the Parish Council will be asked to sign off this step and, secondly, will see **all** the comments submitted during Reg 14 before we are asked to vote to approve it, whether they have or have not been included in the Plan or resulted in an amendment to the Plan, and where all original text was amended, i.e. a track changes style document to review? We are also going to need time to review this document as it will be rather large. *After discussion it was obvious that there was some confusion as to the exact process following the conclusion of the Reg 14 Consultation and the Clerk was asked to clarify this with the Consultants. However, Councillors were assured that all of the consultation materials available to the steering group would also be made available to the Council in good time before the Plan is to be approved by the Council for sending to ESC*
- I would like to register my thanks to all the members of the Steering Group and the Consultants, for their work on the Plan to date.

- b) To agree the Pre-Submission Draft Plan proceeds to Regulation 14 of the process and goes out to Consultation – Cllr. Bennett proposed the Pre-Submission Draft Plan proceeded to Regulation 14 and was sent out for Consultation, subject to both the Chair of the Parish Council (Cllr. Findley) and the Chair of the Steering Group (Cllr. N Smith) being satisfied that all amendments suggested so far would be included in the Plan. Cllrs. Findley and N Smith confirmed that they were happy to do this. This was seconded by Cllr. V Smith and all were in agreement.

The Clerk was asked to notify the Consultants.

Action: Clerk and Councillors

Re-Entry of Press and Public

6. To accept resignation of Cllr. Mayhew and discuss co-option of up to two Councillors:

Cllr. Findley reported that it was with great sadness that he had accepted the resignation of Cllr. Mayhew, who had contributed immensely to many Parish Council projects and meetings, including leading on the Better Broadband project and bringing it to conclusion.

It was agreed that any prospective new Councillors should be made known to Cllr. Findley for him to provide background on the role.

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

- a) DC/24/0127/FUL - Alterations and extensions at Ash Greys, Church Lane, Ufford. *This item was discussed after item 4, to allow the member of the public to listen and then leave when the meeting went in to camera.* Councillors made the following comments:
- This is essentially a reconfiguration of the building, with very little extension of it.
 - It is noted that an Arboricultural Impact Assessment has been called for but the reconfiguration of the house and any extension will have no impact on trees
 - The property is not very visible and the car parking spaces will remain at 3
 - Conclusion: **No Objection** (Prop: Cllr. Findley, Sec: Cllr. Jones, all in agreement). Clerk to write to ESC.
- b) DC/24/0336/VOC - Variation of Condition No.13 of Application C/03/0899 - Timing change of illumination only. Note same lighting nothing else changed. Change of timing from 8.30pm until 10.00pm for illuminations of driving range - Ufford Park Golf Club, Yarmouth Road, Melton (*part in Ufford*). Councillors made the following comments:
- Looking on the Portal, a Bat Impact Survey has already been requested and I totally agree with this; we should send our Bat Survey results to ESC

- This will have the greatest impact on the houses in Parklands, Lime Close and Nicholls Close. If the air is misty the light is magnified and the whole area is lit up, causing not only disturbance to residents but also to wildlife
 - We have a 'Dark Skies' Policy in our emerging Neighbourhood Plan, we should quote this and send the wording to ESC
 - I believe an Environmental Impact Survey should also be undertaken
 - Conclusion: **Objection** (on grounds above) (Prop: Cllr. Jones, Sec: Cllr. Bennett, all in agreement). Clerk to write to ESC.
- c) Appeal - AP/23/0069/REFUSE (DC/23/0965/OUT) | Outline Application (all matters reserved save for access) - Construction of up to four dwellings and garages | Part Former Crown Nursery, High Street, Ufford. Councillors made the following comments:
- [It was noted that the appeal was lodged back in August 2023, but had only just gone live on the Planning Inspectorate Website.
 - It is interesting that half this site overlaps with the application for the Business Hub. A recent piece of legal Case History (Hillside Parks Ltd v Snowdonia National Park Authority [2022] UKSC 30) had seen the Supreme Court rule on a planning application where there was an overlap of two permitted applications. It was thought that this ruling may have an effect on this application, should the appeal be allowed.
 - The main reason for the refusal of the permission was because the site is outside the Settlement Boundary and if we are going to make any further comments we should concentrate on this.
 - I am surprised that this appeal has not been withdrawn, especially following discussions the NPSG has had regarding alternative use of the land, but perhaps the agent is waiting for the Plan to be published.
 - Conclusion: It was agreed that a further letter should be sent to the Inspector, reiterating the Council's **objection**, however that this should be delayed until 4th March, in case the Appeal was withdrawn (Prop: Cllr. Jones, Sec: Cllr. N Smith, all in agreement). Clerk to prepare letter in conjunction with Cllr. Jones..

Action: Clerk

8. Other Planning Matters:

- a) To acknowledge previous months list of ESC Planning decisions – The Clerk confirmed that ESC made no decisions on planning applications in Ufford, during January 2024.

- b) To receive update on communications with ESC Planning Department and SCC Flood and Water Management team, with reference to the Surface Water Draining Plan for the former Crown Nursery Site – A letter from Ben Locksmith (SCC Flood and Water Management team) had been received but Councillors still had concerns as to who is responsible for flooding overspilling from the former Crown Nursery site on to roads such as The Oaks, Tovells and School Lane, and beyond in to other parts of Ufford, during high levels of rainfall, which appeared to be more frequent recently.

Cllr. N Smith repeated that a pond in the north westerly corner of the Nursery was put in to capture rainfall from the A12 Slip Road, and that this greatly contributed to the amount of water that was being managed. It was agreed that concerns should be raised with the Internal Drainage Board (cc'd to the County and District Councillors) and the Clerk was asked to contact them.

- c) Additional Item – Goldsmiths Meadow (Meadow on the corner of Yarmouth Road and Old Bredfield Road) – The Clerk reported that half of Goldsmiths Meadow (on the corner of Yarmouth Road and Old Bredfield Road) had recently been cut, with a fence being established perpendicular to Yarmouth Road. The workmen had indicated it was being cleared for future use by the Bus Shelter Ipswich CIC project. The Clerk had spoken to the founder of the BSI project and he had indicated that he had requested the forms for Pre-Application Advice from ESC, but that these had not been completed yet. He hoped to come along to a future meeting to discuss his plans with the Parish Council.
- d) Additional Item – Solar Farm, Pettistree – Cllr. Findley advised that the proposed Solar Farm at Loudham (Pettistree) - DC/21/5550/FUL - had been sent out for further consultation by ESC, with comments required by 11th March 2024.

Action: Clerk

9. Community Hall Upgrade:

- a) To receive update on the project for refurbishing the Community Hall Toilets from the Hall Committee – Cllrs. V Smith and Buxbaum reported on a large number of comments that had been received regarding proposed changes to the Hall toilets. It was agreed that just two options should be drawn up and costed. These would then go firstly to the Hall Committee for one option to be approved, and then to the Parish Council for the project to be managed. It was agreed that the item be placed back on to the Agenda for the April meeting, when hopefully the options had been costed and discussed.

- b) To agree which funds to use for the Project (CIL or Reserves) – After discussion it was proposed by Cllr. Findley that the funds required to support the Community Hall Toilet Refurbishment from the Parish Council, should come from the CIL funds currently being held. This was seconded by Cllr. Hawthorne and Councillors voted 7 in favour with 1 abstention. These funds were to be earmarked on the Budget Accounts Sheet.
- c) EV Charging Point – To receive update on the current position – Cllr. V Smith reported that it had been established that the Parish Council did own the EV Charging Point. It was agreed that it required adding to the Asset Register and notification sent to the insurers that it required insurance for accidental damage.

Cllr. V Smith also reported that he was still awaiting full details of the new contract to run and maintain the Point, a service that would hopefully be at no cost to either UPC or the Hall Committee but may bring some financial reward. It was also noted that the invoice for the charges to date for the facility was still to be calculated.

Action: Cllrs. V Smith and Clerk

10. Projects List:

- a) To receive update on D-Day commemorations 2024 – The Clerk reported that sadly no resident had responded to the article in the February PUNCH. However, she had suggested that herself and Cllr. Findley could organise a small event, consisting of a small ground level beacon (to be lit at 9.15pm on 6th June 2024), the reading of the D-Day 80 Proclamation, a toast to all who took part in the actual event and the sharing of stories of relatives.
- b) 'Wild about Wickham - update on potential for Wild about Ufford following 3rd February launch at Wickham Market – Cllr. Findley reported that 5 or 6 Ufford residents attended the launch in Wickham Market. They were now working as a group, with no immediate support needed from the Parish Council and were planning soft launches at the Garden Club Show (13th July), the Garden Club Plant Exchange and the Family Day at The White Lion. It was agreed that support would be considered as and when requested.
- c) Emergency Plan – To receive update from Cllrs. Bennett and Hawthorne on establishing an Emergency Plan – Cllr. Bennett reported that he had contacted an officer of East Suffolk Council who had recently been appointed to assist with the development of Emergency Plans, and had invited him to see the Community Hall. He had also written an article for the April PUNCH, to invite residents to register ways in which they could provide assistance.

Action: Clerk

11. Finance Matters:

- a) To receive and agree Accounts as of 31st January 2024 - The accounts had been distributed and Cllr. Findley had verified the figures in the bank accounts. There were no questions.
- b) To receive update on moving funds to a CCLA Account - The Clerk confirmed that the Deposit Funds had now been moved to the Lloyds Current Account, awaiting transfer to the CCLA Account. The registration form for the CCLA account had been completed and would be sent off shortly. The Clerk suggested a revision to the initial funds to be placed with the CCLA and that these be reduced to £25,000 as there were significant known costs from the reserves that would be requested before the 2024/25 Precept was received. This suggestion was proposed by Cllr. V Smith, seconded by Cllr. Bennett and all were in agreement.
- c) To review the Internal Controls observed by the Council and the Appropriateness of the Internal Auditor – The Councillors discussed the current internal controls in place for all financial transactions and the suitability of the Internal Auditor, and agreed no changes were necessary.
- d) To authorise a Councillor to become a Bank Signatory – Cllr. Jones indicated that she would happily become a Bank Signatory, to bring the number back up to five. This was proposed by Cllr. Hawthorne, seconded by Cllr. Findley and all were in agreement. Clerk to prepare Bank Mandate.
- e) To authorise the following Invoices for Payment:

i. J Hallett (Salary and Expenses)	£1,061.73
ii. SCC Pension Fund (Clerk's Pension)	£318.63
iii. D Findley (Water Testing Consumables)	£113.70
iv. K N Coe (Maintenance)	£260.00
v. Thurlow Nunn Standen Ltd (Solid Wheelbarrow Wheel)	£46.06

The above payments were proposed by Cllr. V Smith, seconded by Cllr. Jones with 7 in agreement and 1 abstention that the payments be paid. Cllrs. Bennett and Hawthorne 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. RAL Display and Marketing Ltd (Display Boards)	£210.00
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- g) To note Payments received since last meeting:

i. Astco Recycling (Clothes Bank)	£27.00
ii. Greener Rendlesham (Contribution towards Water Testing)	£100.00

Action: Clerk

Chair's initials.....

12. Documentation – To confirm the review of:

a) Code of Conduct (2020)

The Code of Conduct had been sent to all to review. Each Councillor present confirmed they had reviewed the document.

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

- a) Community Partnership Meeting on 25th January - David Findley had circulated a summary note and further commented that there was £25,000 to be spent in the CP fund for the Wickham Market Ward
- b) ESPA Annual Conference – Cllr. N Smith had circulated a report on this meeting and highlighted a few interesting elements. He confirmed that he would advise on the Council affiliating to the group, if he felt it necessary, in the future.
- c) Meeting with residents of a property in Ufford Place – The Clerk reported that she had met with two residents of Ufford Place with reference to work being carried out in the Woods. She had then discussed concerns with the Woodlands group and the Chair and a letter of reassurance about proposed works would be sent to the residents the following day.

14. To receive agenda items for next meeting and agree date of Next Meeting (19th March 2024):

- Items carried forward
- Review of Risk Assessments
- Annual Parish Meeting

Action: Clerk

The meeting was closed at 9.02pm

Signed:.....

Cllr. David Findley - Chair

Date:

Judi Hallett
Clerk to Ufford Parish Council

Chair's initials.....