

Minutes of Ufford Parish Council Meeting

Held on 19th November 2019 ~ 7.00pm

The Community Hall, The Avenue, Ufford

Present

Cllr. Kathryn Jones (Chair)
Cllr. Pat Edworthy
Cllr. Jane Hawthorne

Cllr. Keith Bennett
Cllr. David Findley
Cllr. Ashley O'Malley

Cllr. Nick Crocker
Cllr. Guy Foskett
Cllr. John Skinner

Judi Hallett (Clerk)

No members of the public were present

1. To receive Apologies for absence:

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr. Stephen Mayhew (Away), Cllr. David Pearce (Away), Cllr. Alexander Nicoll and Cllr. Carol Poulter. These were noted.

2. To receive any Declarations of Interest on Agenda Items and any applications for dispensation:

There were no declarations of interest or applications for dispensation

3. Public Session:

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

- *There were no members of the public present.*

b) Reports or comment from SCDC and SCC Councillors:

- **Dist. Cllr. Carol Poulter** – Cllr. Poulter had sent her apologies.
- **Cnty. Cllr. Alexander Nicoll** – Cllr. Nicoll had sent his apologies:

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

a) DC/19/3949/FUL - Alterations and single storey extension to existing dwelling, involving removal of existing studio - 3 Lady Cottages Church Lane, Ufford. Councillors made the following comments:

- Approval was granted in 2011 (C/11/2353 and 2354) with conditions requiring further details re materials and design. Details were not submitted but the work has now been completed. The applications a) and b) are now submitted to regularise the position
- **Conclusion: No objection** The Clerk was asked to send comment directly to ESC

b) DC/19/3950/LBC - Listed Building Consent - Alterations and single storey extension to existing dwelling, involving removal of existing studio - 3 Lady Cottages Church Lane, Ufford. Councillors made the following comments:

- As above
- **Conclusion: No objection** - The Clerk was asked to send comment directly to ESC.

Chair's initials.....

- c) DC/19/4220/FUL - Alteration and single storey lean-to extension to ground floor back elevation of existing dwelling - 4 Melton Hamlet, Lower Street, Ufford. Councillors made the following comments:
- Development at the rear of the property, cottages are so narrow
 - Plans will copy the new extension of the property next door (3 Melton Hamlet)
 - **Conclusion: No objection** - The Clerk was asked to send comment directly to ESC.

Action: Clerk

5. To acknowledge previous months list of SCDC Planning decisions and to discuss any other planning matters to include:

The details of the Planning decisions made during October 2019, which affect properties in Ufford, had been previously circulated (full list available from Clerk).

- a) Report on progress of the Caravan Site on Yarmouth Road and reply from Ben Chester (SCC Highways) – It was reported that a letter had been posted on the Planning Portal, from the new owners of the site, showing a series of four photographs and text asking for confirmation that the small amount of work completed on Entrance A, was sufficient to denote that the works had been started. The Clerk was asked to investigate what amount of work constitutes ‘starting’ an application.

The letter of reply from Ben Chester was discussed and the contents debated. In conclusion it was agreed to write back to Mr. Chester to question his comment that his ability to question the access points was ‘severely limited’, a more thorough response from SCC Highways to the original application would never have permitted the development. It was also agreed that the only persons who may be able to ‘hold SCC to account’ would be anyone involved in an accident at this location in the future.

The Clerk confirmed that no response had been received to the Parish Council’s letter of complaint as to how this application had been processed. The Clerk was asked to chase this and point out the letter from the new developers on the portal.

- b) To discuss ESC decision on DC/19/3686/VLA (Variation of Legal Agreement Application to discharge legal agreement on DC/15/2374/OUT - Erection of 7x single storey bungalow dwellings at Land At Hill Farm, Yarmouth Road, Ufford) and any further action UPC wishes to take – It was noted that, although the PC had been notified that the application was recommended for permission to be granted via referral panel for a delegated decision, the Planning Portal had not been updated as yet. Either way, it was felt there was no further action UPC could take.

- c) To discuss letter received by some residents with reference to development at Crown Nursery – Councillors and the Clerk reported that many residents had received a second ‘consultation’ questionnaire from Landex, regarding possible uses for a section of land at the former Crown Nursery.

After discussion it was agreed that the Clerk should draft a PUNCHLine article which included the confirmation that the PC had been contacted by some residents, that we had discussed the matter at the meeting, that they were free to respond to the consultation if they wished, however that, should a formal planning application be presented, they would need to write in to East Suffolk Council again, for their comments to be counted when the application was discussed. It was also recommended that the PUNCHLine mentioned that the previous application had generated over 200 letters of objection and that this number would be required again, should another application be submitted. It was suggested that details of the responses received by Landex could be requested, however, it was felt these could never be verified and therefore a request was pointless.

Action: Clerk

6. To agree Minutes of meetings dated 15th October 2019:

The minutes of the Full Council meeting dated 15th October 2019 were proposed as a true record by Cllr. Crocker, seconded by Cllr. O’Malley and all Councillors were in agreement that they be signed.

Action: Clerk

7. Clerk’s Update on Previous Minutes and Actions: The Clerk made the following statements:

- a) Updated ESC Planning Portal – The Clerk reported that the ESC Planning Portal had been modified for Parish Councils and this now allowed her to track and respond to applications more easily.

8. Neighbourhood Plan – To discuss paper produced by Cllr. Bennett:

Cllr. Bennett’s report had been circulated and he was thanked for his work on it. The contents were discussed fully and key quotations were reiterated. It was commented that many parishes had been disappointed when their plans had been overwritten by other plans, especially when many thousands of pounds had been spent. It was also felt that a plan would have to include areas for possible development, when in fact no further development was required in Ufford, as indicated in the soon to be published SCDC Local Plan. Finally it was suggested that any plan would take at least 3 years to produce and would need updating regularly (at least every 5 years).

However, there was concern that if the parish did not have a plan then they could leave themselves vulnerable to development of some of the ‘brownfield’ sites in the village. It was suggested that the Local Plan draft indicated that no new development should occur in the village and that this would be in force early 2020. In conclusion it was agreed that, at this point, Ufford should not explore the possibility of producing a Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr. Bennett's document did also cover the Parish Plan (produced in 2008) and the Parish Review of 2017. After discussion it was agreed that a small advisory committee should be set up (Cllrs. Bennett, Skinner and Hawthorne, alongside the Clerk) to review the findings of both plans and suggest possible further steps that could be taken. The Clerk was asked to set up a meeting in early 2020. Following this initial meeting, it was suggested that any 'Working Party' taking actions forward, included residents from other organisations, such as the Community Hall and the Parish Hall.

Action: Clerk

9. Highways and Footpaths

a) To receive an update from Cllr. Findley – The latest VWP report had been circulated and it was complimented. Cllr. Findley gave an update on working with Pettistree PC (and a group of volunteers) on paths between the two villages. He also suggested that local land owners had been very helpful in getting issues sorted. The following additional matters were discussed:

- Signage – It was suggested that the budget for 2020/21 should include funding for signage numbering the footpaths and showing distances to forward locations but it may be possible to seek funding through amenity grants.
- Clapper Path – It was confirmed that no further work would be carried out by Landex or SCC to this path but it was suggested a winter cut would be of benefit.
- Jubilee Path – Cllr. Hawthorne asked if the temporary signs denoting the Jubilee Path (running parallel to The Avenue) could be replaced by permanent markers. Discussing the access to Parklands Woods from The Avenue on the hill nearer to School lane, a request was made to review the staggered restriction barriers which caused difficulty for parents pushing a buggy and resulted in them walking down the hill to the Recreation Ground main entrance.

The Clerk agreed to work with the FVWP to resolve these issues.

b) To receive comment from a resident of School Lane regarding overgrown hedges in School Lane: The letter from the concerned resident was discussed. Following debate, the Clerk was asked to contact each household along School Lane, where the hedge was overhanging the highway, this would include contacting SCC Highways for the hedge outside 'The Oaks'.

c) Additional Item - SLOW signs – The Clerk was asked to request the cost of painting 'SLOW' on the highway; in order that the PC could consider funding some repainting where SCC had declined to do so.

d) Additional Item - Speed sign still not working – It was reported that there were now no leaves on the tree in front of the Speed Sign along High Street, outside Jarrah and yet the sign was still not working. The Clerk was asked to report this to SCC Highways.

Action: Clerk and Cllr. Findley

10. Recreation Ground and Parklands Woods:

- a) To receive general update on Parklands Wood from FofPWG and update on Lottery application for financial support – Cllr. Hawthorne’s report had been circulated; the Lottery application has been submitted but a response is not expected until February 2020. The Tree Planting Day on 30th November has been promoted and a number of young families are getting involved. A number of saplings have been replanted along the Avenue, as they had been knocked down. White posts have been put in to protect them and Cllr. Hawthorne agreed to measure them to ensure they were at least 1m from the highway. The Clerk was asked to speak to the insurers to confirm that the placement of these posts was permitted. Cllr. Hawthorne also suggested that a gentleman who has created a number of wood carvings at Notcutts (in Woodbridge) was interested in viewing the Redwood stump and possibly working with the PC to create a feature piece.
- b) To discuss maintenance of the Recycling Area – It was suggested, and agreed, that the person carrying out the weekly visual checks of the Play Park, should also sweep the recycling area once a month, where there is often broken glass.
- c) Additional Item - Moles – The Clerk notified Council that she would need to engage ES Norse to deal with the moles on the Recreation Ground, where there are numerous molehills.

Action: Clerk and Cllr. Hawthorne

11. Finance Matters:

- a) To receive accounts for October 2019 and inspect the Bank Statements:

The Accounts to 31st October had been sent to all and there were no questions. Cllr. Edworthy agreed to examine the Bank Statement.

- b) To discuss and agree Grant Applications for payment in April 2020:

All the grant applications had been displayed and each one was considered. Councillors agreed that the applications from SARS and Citizens Advice were outside the Policy and would therefore not be considered. Councillors also commented on the moral arguments for supporting the Church when the number of residents attending regularly was reducing.

After discussion the Clerk was asked to undertake the following actions:

- Request a report from the Redwood Trails BMX Group as to their membership numbers, usage and management processes, as agreed with the BMX Group when they set up the track
- Speak with Mr Purcell regarding the charges for the Open Cemetery grass cutting and suggest Cllr. Skinner could speak with the contractor to negotiate a better price.

With the exception of the above two applications, Cllr. Jones proposed the others were permitted as requested (list available from the Clerk). This was seconded by Cllr. Skinner and all Councillors were in agreement.

c) To discuss draft budget for 2020/2021:

The draft budget for 2020/21 (as suggested by the Finance Councillors) had been circulated to all Councillors. The Clerk ran through each line and a number of questions were asked and answered. The Councillors agreed to review the draft further and alert the Clerk to any suggested amendments.

It was agreed the budget would be finalised at the December meeting.

With reference to the ground rent payable by the Community Hall, Cllr. Skinner asked if the terms of the Licence could be reviewed as he remembered a clause that required the amount of the rent to be reviewed every 5 years. The Clerk was asked to check the licences.

d) To discuss draft proposal for Precept request for 2020/2021:

The Clerk gave details, as provided by ES Council, as to the amount of Precept the Council could request if they wished to show a 'zero' change on Council Tax Bills. She had also worked out the figure that would need to be requested if 1, 2 and 4 percentage rises were applied. Councillors agreed to consider these figures and agree the Precept amount at the December meeting.

At 9.00pm it was agreed to suspend Standing Orders to allow the meeting to be completed

e) To discuss renewing membership of the Suffolk Preservation Society (£30):

Cllr. Jones proposed that the PC renewed their membership of the Suffolk Preservation Society. This was seconded by Cllr. Bennett and all Councillors were in agreement. The Clerk was asked to draw the cheque for signing.

f) To authorise the following Invoices for Payment:

i.	J Hallett (Salary + Office & mileage expenses)	£665.78
ii.	SCC Pension Fund (Clerk's pension)	£213.89
iii.	East Suffolk Council (Election Costs 2019)	£934.69

The above payments were proposed by Cllr. Jones, seconded by Cllr. Crocker and all Councillors were in agreement that they be paid. The cheques were signed by Cllrs Hawthorne and Edworthy.

g) To note Payments made since last meeting:

- i. None

h) To note Payments received since last meeting:

i.	Hollesley PC (Padlock reimbursement)	£12.66
		Action: Clerk

12. To receive reports on meetings attended on behalf of the Council and to discuss:

- East Suffolk Partnership Annual Forum - The Clerk reported that unfortunately she had been unable to attend the East Suffolk Partnership Annual Forum at the last minute.
- East Suffolk Workshop – Cllr. Edworthy – This workshop had concluded the area required better transport, better housing and employment opportunities

13. To agree dates and venues for meetings in 2020:

The following meeting dates were proposed by the Clerk for 2020:

- 21st Jan (Community Hall)
- 18th Feb (Community Hall)
- 17th March (Community Hall)
- 21st April (St Mary’s Hall)
- 28th April (Community Hall) - APM
- 19th May (St Mary’s Hall)
- 16th June (St Mary’s Hall)
- 21st July (St Mary’s Hall)
- 18th August (St Mary’s Hall) – *if needed*
- 15th Sept (St Mary’s Hall)
- 20th October (Community Hall)
- 17th Nov (Community Hall)
- 15th Dec (Community Hall)

14. To receive agenda items for the next meeting and agree date of the Next Meeting:

- Finance matters including draft budget and Precept Request for 2020/2021

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as **Tuesday 17th December 2019** at The Community Hall, The Avenue, Ufford.

Action: Clerk

The meeting was closed at 9.12PM

Signed:

Date:

Chair: Cllr. Kathryn M Jones

Judi Hallett

Clerk to Ufford Parish Council

Chair’s initials.....