

Minutes of Ufford Parish Council Meeting

Held on 19th March 2024 ~ 7.00pm

The Community Hall, The Avenue, Ufford

Present

Cllr. David Findley (Chair)
Cllr. Jane Hawthorne
Cllr. Vincent Smith

Cllr. Keith Bennett
Cllr. Kathryn Jones

Cllr. Pat Edworthy
Cllr. Nigel Smith

Judi Hallett (Clerk)

Cnty Cllr. Alexander Nicoll

Three 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. Tim Buxbaum (Away) and Cllr. Nick Crocker (Away). District Councillor Sally Noble had also sent her apologies.

b) To Accept Apologies:

The apologies from Cllrs. Buxbaum and Crocker were proposed as accepted by Cllr. Jones, seconded by Cllr. Hawthorne 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 – Item 7 and 10 e. – Treasurer of the Community Hall
- Cllr. Edworthy - Item 7 and 10 e. – Trustee of the Community Hall Charity

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):

- No members of the public wished to address the Council

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 reported on the following elements:
 - Land at Old Bredfield Road – A notice of illegal action had been issued by SCC Highways to the owners of the land, after an entrance was created. Both SCC and ESC appear to be taking a hard line on this case but it is vital that pictures are taken if work starts again as the roads in this area are dangerous [Cllr. Nicoll was thanked for the time he had spent on this matter]
 - Sizewell C – Two 'Transport Forum' meetings have taken place recently, one more orderly and productive than the other. It is expected that with the Sizewell C project now starting that there will most likely be 10 years of traffic chaos; there are measures in place to control larger vehicles but I fear the smaller LGVs will take whatever route is best for them. A recent meeting at Bentwaters (*on the subject of traffic but not specifically Sizewell C*) demonstrated how it could be used during the construction period; however, there are many 'green' companies at Bentwaters. [Cllr. Nicoll was again thanked for his update on this matter. The Clerk was asked to contact the Sizewell team to register UPC's interest in being part of the Transport Consultation Group]
 - Potholes in Woodbridge – I am working with a local Councillor to see if issues with potholes in Woodbridge and the surrounding villages, can be resolved; this may result in some resurfacing around the Melton Crossing in early April
 - Q. – There is a consultation ongoing at the moment around changes to the County Council; should we be involved? Yes, it is a consultation around devolution and you should respond if you wish. I do not agree with the concept of having a 'Leader' of the Council who is not necessarily linked to the main party in office; I can see this potentially causing issues.

4. To sign Minutes of meeting dated 20th February 2024:

The minutes of the Full Council meeting dated 20th February 2024 had been circulated and there were no further amendments. The minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr. V Smith, seconded by Cllr. Jones 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

Chair's initials.....

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

a) DC/24/0441/FUL - Use of plant display and associated sales area for standing of 30 x No. shipping containers for self-storage and provision of flexible external storage area. Demolition of glazed plant display area and erection of self-storage building together with associated parking facilities, security fencing, CCTV cameras and lighting. - The Nursery, Main Road, Pettistree. Councillors made the following comments:

- This proposed development is in Pettistree and not Ufford. The Plant sales area will be relocated so we are not losing one business and gaining another.
- The company running the storage facility also has a provision in Leiston.
- This is yet another 'creep' of development in Pettistree/Wickham Market, that creates additional traffic to the High Street in Ufford. If the original Storage Facility for 20 containers, and the two housing developments on the edge of Wickham Market had all been presented together, we may have had the opportunity to insist a slip road on the A12 (south bound) was put in place. Instead, small creep does not allow for this major expense on infrastructure.
- In my experience there will be very little additional traffic as storage is often visited once and very rarely afterwards.
- The additional lighting may be good for the local businesses but not for the Bats!
- Conclusion: **Objection on the grounds that it will create more traffic through Ufford High Street and the additional lighting will affect the Bat population** (Prop: Cllr. Findley, Sec: Cllr. Jones, all in agreement). Clerk to write to ESC.

b) DC/21/5550/FUL - Erection of a solar photovoltaic (PV) array, with a total export capacity of up to 21 MW. Each of the solar panels will be mounted on a fixed panel system. The panels are covered by high transparency solar glass with an anti-reflective coating which minimises glare and glint, while aiding in the maximum absorption of the available sunlight. The panels are dark grey/blue in colour and are mounted on a frame of anodized aluminium alloy and galvanized steel - Land At Park Farm, Loudham Hall Road, Loudham. Councillors made the following comments:

- We have already commented a number of times, however the plans have changed. The site appears to be reduced by around 10/15% however a buffer zone close to a property is now removed and it is still very large scale
- Wickham Market and Pettistree Parish Council have both written in with strong letters of objection, I think we should support them.
- We should re-iterate our previous comments and support the neighbouring Councils
- Conclusion: **Objection** (Prop: Cllr. Findley, Sec: Cllr. V Smith all in agreement). Clerk to write to ESC.

Action: Clerk

6. Other Planning Matters:

- a) To acknowledge previous months list of ESC Planning decisions – The list of decisions on planning applications in Ufford, during February 2024 had been circulated and there were no further comments.
- b) To receive update on communications with the Internal Drainage Board, with reference to the Surface Water Draining Plan for the former Crown Nursery Site – The Clerk had received a reply from Mr Tom Hunter of the Water Management Alliance earlier in the day. The letter explained that the East Suffolk IDB district did not extend to the Crown Nursery site and so he could not assist.

After discussion it was agreed that this matter could be taken no further. However, all correspondence should be carefully filed and referred to in future, should there be drainage issues.

- c) Neighbourhood Plan – to receive an update on the Regulation 14 Exhibition and the progress of the Consultation – Cllrs N Smith and Jones gave an update on the very successful Regulation 14 Exhibition, held on 14th March. Over 80 visitors had been received and it was remarked how long people stayed to read the material and comment. Both Rachel Leggett and the Clerk were thanked for their work on the day and the Chair requested the other members of the Steering Group outside of the Council were also thanked.
- d) Additional Item – Land off Old Bredfield Road (Goldsmiths Meadow) – As per Cllr. Nicoll's report (see above) it was noted that an 'Illegal action' notice had been served on the owners of this site, following removal of ancient hedgerow and installation of an entrance. Councillors agreed to monitor the site closely and respond to any planning application that was submitted. It was believed 'Pre Application' advice had been sought by the Ipswich Bus Shelter Project, from East Suffolk Council Planning Department.

Action: Clerk

7. Community Hall Upgrade:

- a) To receive update on the project for refurbishing the Community Hall Toilets from the Hall Committee – Cllrs. Edworthy and V Smith reported that they were still awaiting plans for the alternative layout of the toilets but that many Hall Committee members had already expressed a view that the toilets should remain the same layout as present. After discussion it was agreed that the Committee should make a final decision on potential layout, then, if agreed, advise Cllr. Buxbaum that alternative plans were not required. They should then obtain an updated quote from their preferred supplier and notify the Parish Clerk, in order that the matter could be discussed at the April Parish Council meeting.

- b) EV Charging Point – To receive update on the current position – Cllr. V Smith reported that no further information had been received on this subject. It was agreed to remove it from the agenda, until such time as the information was received. Cllr. Findley reported that SCC had earmarked a further £15m for EV Charging Points.

Action: Cllrs. V Smith and Clerk

8. **‘.gov.uk’ domains and email addresses – To discuss moving over**

The Clerk had circulated details from Suffolk.Cloud with reference to the costs of moving to a ‘.gov.uk’ domain for our Website and email addresses. The total costs were discussed, along with the requirement for keeping mailboxes tidy so as not to exceed the storage limit. It was also commented that a ‘.gov.uk’ mailbox would be more secure.

In conclusion it was agreed to that the time was not appropriate and we should revisit the matter at the end of 2024, when the Neighbourhood Plan was complete.

Action: Clerk

9. **Projects List:**

- a) Wild about Ufford – to receive an update on the current position – Cllr. Findley reported that six or seven residents had formed a group to promote the ‘Wild About Ufford’ concept; but that there would be no formal launch, it would just become part of organised events in the village. At the moment no funding was required and the matter would go back on to the Agenda, as and when funding was requested.

Cllr. Findley also reported that Notcutts were supportive of the initiative and would support elements of the project as requested. Contacts with Transition Woodbridge, RSPB and Suffolk Wildlife Trust were being followed up.

- b) Emergency Plan – To receive update – Cllrs. Bennett and Hawthorne reported that there would be an article in the April PUNCH and they had tried to make contact with an officer of East Suffolk Council, who had been charged with helping parishes develop Emergency Plans.

- c) Annual Parish Meeting – To receive update from the Clerk – The Clerk confirmed that all attendees to the APM had confirmed, with the exception of Mr Flory who was away and Cllr. Nicoll who had not yet confirmed his attendance. The Clerk advised that she would send a reminder PUNCHLine on 25th March.

It was agreed to display the Neighbourhood Plan Exhibition Boards between 6.00pm and 6.40pm, for anyone unable to attend the previous exhibition.

Action: Clerk

10. Finance Matters:

- a) To receive and agree Accounts as of 29th February 2024 - The accounts had been distributed and Cllr. Edworthy verified the figures in the bank accounts. There were no questions.
- b) To receive update on the CCLA Account - The Clerk confirmed that the application form had been sent to the CCLA and receipt had been acknowledged.
- c) To review Reserves held by the Council – The Clerk had circulated a report on the reserves and read this out during the meeting. There were no questions and no call for any revision in the reserves held.
- d) To discuss purchase of Mini Tree Popper for Woodlands Group – Cost approx. £290.00 (+ VAT) – Cllr. Hawthorne declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item as a member of the Woodlands Group. She further reported that a second hand pair of Mini Tree Poppers were presently being used by the Group and they were very useful. After discussion Cllr. Bennett proposed that Cllr. Noble should be contacted to request a grant of net cost of a new set of poppers, from her 2024/25 Locality Budget. If this was not forthcoming, the cost would be met from the Parish Council Woodlands Budget for 2024/25. This was seconded by Cllr. N Smith and Councillors voted 6 For with 1 abstention.
- e) To authorise the following Invoices for Payment:
- | | | |
|-------|---|-----------|
| i. | J Hallett (Salary and Expenses) | £923.30 |
| ii. | SCC Pension Fund (Clerk's Pension) | £254.90 |
| iii. | Ufford Community Hall (50% costs for EV Charging Point) | £152.36 |
| iv. | Ufford Punch Newsletter (Annual Subscription + NP Flyer) | £110.00 |
| v. | K N Coe (Maintenance) | £75.00 |
| vi. | Matthew Allen (Tree Works) | £300.00 |
| vii. | Compass Point Planning and Rural Consultants (NP Stage 4) | £3,633.75 |
| viii. | J Hallett (Refreshments for Exhibition) | £20.60 |
| ix. | R Leggett (NP Stage 4 plus Printing) | £2,201.64 |
| x. | Value Products Ltd (Parking Sign for Spring Lane) | £35.79 |
| xi. | Suffolk County Council (Street Lighting) | £694.70 |

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

The Clerk commented that the Street Lighting costs were much higher than had been predicted and agreed to send the breakdown to all.

f) To note Payments made since last meeting:

- i. None

g) To note Payments received since last meeting:

- i. B Knights (BMX Insurance) £200.00
- ii. Astco Clothing Bank £18.00

Action: Clerk

11. Parklands Woods – To discuss work on the Woods close to properties in Ufford Place and Nicholls Close:

Cllr. Hawthorne recalled details of dialogue between a resident of Ufford Place, the Woodlands Group and the Clerk. Principally, the resident had requested a large tree should be reduced, to allow more light in to their garden and the lower level planting was left, or added to, so improving privacy in their garden. Cllrs. Hawthorne and Findley were due to speak to the resident again the following day but it was commented that the woodland would continue to be managed in line with the Management Plan that was in place.

Action: Cllrs. Hawthorne and Findley

12. Highways:

- a) To receive the latest Footpaths Report – The latest Footpath report from Ms. Forge had been circulated and she was thanked for all her efforts.

13. Documentation – To confirm adoption of:

- a) Risk Assessment (Financial) – sent to Councillors on 21st February 2024
- b) Risk Assessment (Non-Financial) – sent to Councillors on 21st February 2024
- c) Asset Register (March 2024) - sent to Councillors on 11th March 2024

The above documents were taken as read and as one. Cllr. Findley proposed they be adopted. This was seconded by Cllr. Bennett and all were in agreement.

Action: Clerk

14. Quarterly Health and Safety Review – To receive notification of any H&S matters and to add to Action List

The Clerk asked if there were any matters relating to Health and Safety to bring to her attention; there were none. Cllr. Hawthorne asked that the recent Chain Saw training be noted.

The Clerk further confirmed that she was working with Cllr. Bennett on a Check List to ensure all matters in the Health and Safety Policy were met as required. It was felt that if any requirements could not reasonably be met, the Council should consider amending the Policy.

Action: Clerk

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

- JPTI Meeting at Bentwaters – Cllr. N Smith reported on the meeting and the progress made in recording traffic movements to and from Bentwaters Park
- AEPA - Cllr. N Smith reported on a meeting of this group of Councils connected with all Energy projects in the County
- ESCP – Cllr. Findley reported on a recent meeting of East Suffolk Catchment Partnership which is focused on improving the River Deben and its following resilience.

16. To receive agenda items for next meeting and agree date of Next Meeting (16th April 2024):

- Items carried forward
- Annual Accounts

Action: Clerk

The meeting was closed at 9.03pm

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

Date:

Judi Hallett
Clerk to Ufford Parish Council