

Minutes of Ufford Parish Council Meeting

Held on 18th June 2024 ~ 7.00pm

The Parish Hall, Church Lane, Ufford

Present

Cllr. David Findley (Chair)

Cllr. Keith Bennett

Cllr. Pat Edworthy

Cllr. Jane Hawthorne

Cllr. Kathryn Jones

Cllr. Angela Linforth

Cllr. Nigel Smith

Cllr. Vincent Smith

Cllr. Tig Thomas

Dist. Cllr. Sally Noble

Judi Hallett (Clerk)

No 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. Nick Crocker (Away) and Cllr. Tim Buxbaum (Away). Cllr. Nicoll had also sent his apologies.

b) To Accept Apologies:

The apologies of absence from Cllrs. Crocker and Buxbaum 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. Edworthy - Item 11. a) – Trustee of the Community Hall Charity
- Cllr. V Smith – Item 11. a) – Treasurer of the Community Hall Charity
- Cllr. Hawthorne – Item 7. b) – Reimbursement of expenses

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):

- N/A

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

- East Suffolk Council - Cllr. Noble's report had been circulated and she expanded on the following items:
 - Change in Refuse Collections – This was a Government directive and was proving difficult to implement but would result in enhanced roadside refuse collections. Changes will be implemented in 2025/26.
 - East Suffolk Services – Some issues with staff sickness had affected the refuse collections [none have been reported in Ufford].
 - Flood resilience and improving water quality – a significant new project, still being shaped through meetings with different groups. Plans are to work in partnership with the Deben Climate Centre to restore the Deben through upscaling monitoring, working with farmers on specific flood resilience projects and educating the public and Parish Councils. There will be workshops and some funding to support public awareness and action.
 - Flooding – Ongoing talks with SCC, Wickham Market residents and landowners to try to prevent the flooding seen last year happening again. All parties want to do something but there is very little money around in this financial year. The £5,000 grants available for those flooded last year are still available, there has been a lower take up than expected. ESC have now ringfenced money for Flood Resilience. EA will be doing modelling shortly. Conferences for the two major water suppliers have been attended. [Cllr. Findley commented that Anglian Water are upgrading 5 sewage treatment plants on the Deben and that this will help reduce phosphate levels & weed growth]
 - Q. *Are you speaking with the Internal Drainage Board?* Yes
 - Q. *There has been little notice about the change of Electoral Ward for the General Election; should ESC not have advertised this more?* After discussion it was agreed that the Clerk should send a PUNCHLine detailing the new Ward Name and the Candidates (notice provided by ESC).
- Suffolk County Council – Cllr. Nicoll had sent his apologies

Action: Clerk

4. To sign Minutes of meeting dated 28th May 2024:

The minutes of the Full Council meeting dated 28th May 2024 had been circulated and there were no further amendments. The minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr. Findley, seconded by Cllr. Hawthorne and all Councillors, who were in attendance at the meeting, were in agreement that they be signed.

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The Clerk agreed to publish the minutes on the website.

Action: Clerk

5. To appoint persons to the following offices:

The following appointments were proposed by Cllr. Jones, seconded by Cllr. Edworthy and agreed by all:

- a) SALC Representative (+ meetings) – Cllr. V Smith
- b) Deputy Representative of ESC Community Partnership – *to be discussed at the July meeting*

The Clerk agreed to update the Directory and re-circulate.

Action: Clerk

6. Highways:

- To receive an update on the proposed Gas works on High Street and Byng Hall Road and to decide further actions to take, following Ufford Parish Council letter to Cadent and their response – General comments:
 - A letter was sent to Cadent, Costain and SCC; replies have been received from Cadent and SCC
 - The letter from Cadent dismissed the alternative route for the relaying of the Gas Main, which would use its current location across fields and woods towards Byng Hall Road, away from the High Street.
 - This dismissal by Cadent was felt to be very weak and requires challenging. The relaying of the Main behind the houses, in its current position, will be much less disruptive to the residents and businesses
 - It still appears that closure of Byng Hall Road is required and that is a concern which has not been addressed by Cadent
 - Cadent quoted Government Policy to replace all old pipes, but that is only where they are within 30m of properties, the existing location of the Main is only close to houses in Byng Hall Road.
 - The number of services in the High Street are unknown, surely using the existing route for the pipe will be less work. Why would they want the Main in the High Street? There are fewer land owners to deal with if the pipe is replaced along its current route.
 - Do we raise concerns gently now or do we hold back and await the presentation of their plans in full. Alternatively should we respond to Cadent's letter now?
 - Cadent's refusal to re-use the current location and route of the Gas Main needs challenging; this was generally agreed by Councillors to be the right way forward
 - Cadent were originally looking to co-ordinate the closure with NEST (the company building the bungalows at Hill Farm), this will probably not be possible now and may result in two closures.

- A resident in The Avenue has stepped forward offering advice on “direct drilling” of gas mains and relevant infrastructure. This will be useful as the plans become clearer. Direct drilling is much less disruptive than trenching

It was concluded that the following actions should be taken:

- I. Clerk to draft a reply to Cadent’s letter of 5th June, to SCC as well, and cc Costain and all other originally recipients of our letter of 1st June. Cllrs. N Smith and Findley to advise.

Action: Cllrs. Findley, N Smith and the Clerk

7. Finance Matters:

- a) To receive Accounts as of 31st May 2024 – The Accounts had been circulated and there were no questions. Cllr. Hawthorne had been asked to verify the figures in Lloyds Bank and promised to do so the following day.

- b) To authorise the following Invoices for Payment:

i. J Hallett (Salary and Expenses)	£986.44
ii. SCC Pension Fund (Clerk’s Pension)	£245.63
iii. Thurlow Nunn Standen Ltd (Line for Strimmer)	£38.50
iv. A Martin (Tree Popper)	£306.00
v. R Forge (Fuel for Footpath Cutting Machinery)	£10.13
vi. J Hawthorne (Postage costs for returning borrowed Tree popper)	£26.24

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

Cllr. Jones confirmed that she was now set up to authorise payments and view the bank accounts.

- f) To note Payments made since last meeting:

- i. None

- g) To note Payments received since last meeting:

- i. Locality (NP Grant) £5,070.00

Action: Clerk

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

- a) DC/24/1902/FUL - Proposed front, side and rear extensions to existing detached dwelling - Two Trees, Spring Lane, Ufford. The following comments were noted:
 - These proposals are very large on a small plot and extend right to the boundary

- The plans are misleading, the extension certainly can be seen from the road
 - The work to the two yew trees is extensive (a reduction of a third) and could result in them deteriorating or even dying; this is not clear in the plans
 - This is classic over development of the site
 - There have been no objections from neighbours but they may not wish to be involved
 - This is out of character in the area
 - Conclusion: **Objection** – on the grounds of over development of the site, effect on the character of the street scene and possible devastating effect the work to the yew trees will have on them (Prop: Cllr. V Smith, Sec. Cllr. Bennett, 8 For with 1 abstention)
- b) DC/24/2100/FUL - Single storey rear extension to existing bungalow | Stewarton, The Avenue, Ufford. The following comments were noted:
- This is small scale when compared to other extensions in the area
 - The extension is towards the rear and is replacing an older existing extension
 - Conclusion: **No objection** (Prop: Cllr. Bennett, Sec. Cllr. Findley, all in agreement)
- c) DC/24/2055/LBC - Listed Building Consent - Internal alterations to existing staircase to improve access | Malt House, Spring Lane, Ufford. The following comments were noted:
- This work seems sensible and logical
 - The building is Grade II listed, hence the application
 - Conclusion: **No Objection** (Prop: Cllr. Findley, Sec. Cllr. V Smith, all in agreement)
- d) *Additional Item* - A1 of TPO No. 31 / 1957 1no. Oak (T001 on plan) - Overall crown reduction by up to 6 metres - 12 Nicholls Close, Ufford. The Clerk advised that as this application had been received after the Agenda had been published, Councillors were not permitted to discuss it. She asked that if anyone felt it needed a reply, they should notify her and she would arrange a separate meeting.

Action: Clerk

9. Other Planning Matters:

- a) To acknowledge previous months list of ESC Planning decisions – The list from ESC had been circulated and there were no further comments.
- b) To receive feedback regarding Pettistree Solar Farm decision and ESC Planning Committee South processes – Cllr. Findley reported that he had written to the Leader of East Suffolk Council to express his personal concerns at how the Planning Committee (South) Committee Meeting had been conducted. He had received a full and satisfactory response and was pleased that additional training and guidance would be available to the Committee's Councillors.

Chair's initials.....

- c) Additional Item for Information - DC/23/0965/OUT Part Former Crown Nursery High Street Ufford Outline Application (all matters reserved save for access) - Construction of up to four dwellings and garages – Cllr. Jones reported a small change on the Planning Inspectorate Website, in that it now indicated that a date for the appeal had been set, however, as yet, the date was not shown on the site.

10. Neighbourhood Plan:

- To receive an update on the Grant Funding – The Clerk reported that the full amount requested from Locality (£5,070.00) had been awarded and had been received in to the bank account.
- To discuss next steps following Reg 14 consultation – Cllr. N Smith explained the roles of the Consultants in the NP process and informed Council that the Steering Group were presently waiting for the Consultants to analyse the Regulation 14 comments, before the group could re-assess the draft Plan. All comments and suggested amendments would be shared with Councillors. It was hoped that the revised Plan would be sent to ESC in the Autumn and then on to the Inspector; with the referendum held in Q1 2025.

Action: Clerk and Steering Group

11. Community Hall Upgrade:

- a) To receive update on the Lottery Application for monies to refurbish the Community Hall Toilets – if received – The Clerk reported there was still no word from the National Lottery. Item to be deferred to the July meeting.
- b) Additional Item – EV Charging Point – Cllr. V Smith reported that an update to the management of the EV Charging Point should be known shortly and he asked for an item to be placed on to the July Agenda for it to be discussed.
- c) Additional Item – Garden Maintenance at the Community Hall – Comment was made that the garden at the front of the Community Hall needed attention. It was felt this was a matter for the Hall Committee to discuss.

Action: Clerk

12. Projects List:

- a) Emergency Plan – To receive update from Cllrs. Bennett and Hawthorne – Cllr. Bennett reported that a meeting had been held with Courtney Walsh from ESC. The following had been established:
- ESS hold 100 emergency kits for use as and when needed
 - CW felt that our existing communication systems in the village were excellent (Punchline/HUG)
 - Both Parish and Community Halls had agreed to being used in an emergency
 - A list of key contacts would need to be drawn up

- Cllr. Thomas and another resident had agreed to assist with communications on PUNCHLine and HUG Facebook Page
- Fridge magnets holding information on what to do in an emergency were available but were due to be upgraded shortly
- An ESC workshop was to be attended by Cllr. Bennett and the Clerk
- Further update will be on the agenda at the July meeting

- b) Website Upgrade – To discuss offer of voluntary assistance from Ufford resident to manage and upgrade the Ufford website – The Clerk reported a new resident of Ufford had offered to carryout voluntary work to upgrade the Website. The resident worked for SCC in their Website Admin team and was used to working with the Silver Stripe software.

Councillors welcomed this offer and instructed the Clerk to thank the resident for their generosity in offering help. The Clerk agreed to set up a Zoom to initiate the work.

Action: Cllrs. Bennett, Hawthorne and the Clerk

13. Parklands Woods and Recreation Ground:

- a) To receive update on work in the Woods – Cllr. Hawthorne reported that more volunteers for the Woods Group were needed.
- b) To discuss renewing our Woodland Management Plan and Felling Licence – Cllr. Hawthorne reported that both herself and the Clerk had received written assurances from Trevor Wright at The Forestry Commission about potential grants for Woodland Management Plans . He had confirmed that any grant received from them, to assist with the production of a Woodland Management Plan could be spent however the Parish Council wished and evidence of how it had been spent would not be requested. It was agreed that the grant should be requested by the Parish Council and Cllr. Hawthorne agreed to provide the Clerk with the hyperlink.
- c) Additional Item for Info – Attempted Break In at Resource Locker – Cllr. Findley reported that an attempted break in at the Resource locker had been stopped by an alert member of the public; the children involved had apologised.
- d) Additional Item for info – E-Scooters/Bikes using the Community Hall Recreation Ground Car Park – These had been spotted weaving in and out of cars but the users had not been approached. Situation to be monitored.
- e) Additional Item for info – Graffiti at Hawkeswade Bridge – This had appeared in the past 2 days and had been reported.

Action: Cllr. Hawthorne and the Clerk

14. Documentation – To review and adopt the following:

- a) Financial Regulations June 2024 – The amended document had been sent to all and there were no further amendments. Cllr. Jones proposed it be adopted. This was seconded by Cllr. Edworthy and all were in agreement. The Clerk was asked to finalise the document and publish.

Action: Clerk

15. 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. The following two were noted:

- Overhanging branch at the top of The Avenue, making sight line of vehicles approaching from the right, difficult – Clerk to tackle with hand saw or report to SCC Highways
- Pavement between the top of The Avenue and Parklands overgrown – Clerk to request quote for cutting from Mr Shand

Action: Clerk

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

- JPTI Pre-Meeting Meeting – *Cllr. N Smith* – Cllr. N Smith reported that he had attended a meeting of the JPTI (concept explained) to prepare for a further meeting with ESC the following week. His attendance at the subsequent meeting was also authorised.

Action: Cllr. N Smith

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

- Footpath Report
- Clerk’s Broadband
- Gas Main Work
- EV Charging Point Update

Action: Clerk

The meeting was closed at 9.00pm

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

Date:

Judi Hallett
Clerk to Ufford Parish Council

Chair’s initials.....