

Minutes of Ufford Parish Council Meeting

Held on 15th October 2024 ~ 7.00pm

The Parish Hall, Church Lane, Ufford

Present

Cllr. David Findley (Chair)	Cllr. Keith Bennett	Cllr. Tim Buxbaum
Cllr. Nick Crocker	Cllr. Pat Edworthy	Cllr. Jane Hawthorne
Cllr. Kathryn Jones	Cllr. Angela Linforth	Cllr. Nigel Smith
Cllr. Vincent Smith	Cllr. Tig Thomas	

Cnty. Cllr. Alexander Nicoll Two members of the public were present
Judi Hallett (Clerk)

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting

1. Apologies for absence:

- a) To Receive Apologies: No apologies from UPC Councillors had been received. District Councillor Sally Noble had sent her apologies.
- b) To Accept Apologies: Not applicable

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 9. a) & b) – Trustee of the Community Hall Charity
 - Cllr. V Smith – Item 9. a) & b) – Treasurer of the Community Hall Charity
 - Cllr Hawthorne – Item 11. a) – Member of Friends of Parklands Wood
- 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
 - Cllr. Findley – Declared he had spoken to a resident regarding the Planning Process and how the Portal works, but had received no lobbying

Chair's initials.....

3. Public Session:

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

- Speeding Traffic in The Avenue and School Lane – A member of the public brought to the attention of the Council that drivers often speed up The Avenue (from the Village Sign) and turn down into School Lane at high speed. They have also been observed speeding down The Avenue towards the village sign. She asked if a traffic count could be put in place to measure driver's speeds or if the Community Speedwatch could be based on the junction. The Clerk explained the process for requesting a Traffic Count and where the Community Speedwatch team were permitted to stand, and why there were restrictions. The Clerk agreed to request that '30 MPH roundels' were painted on the road and to try to obtain some 'Speedwatch' signs that could be put up. Cllr. Findley encouraged the resident and others to join the CSW team to assist in their work. *See Cllr. Nicoll's report below.*

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

- East Suffolk Council - Cllr. Noble's report had been circulated
- Suffolk County Council – Cllr. Nicoll reported on the following items:
 - Speeding Traffic – The Sizewell C project team had promised to take note of traffic volumes before the construction started but he was not sure this would have included the rural lanes in Ufford. It would be best to speak to Campsea Ash Clerk to obtain details and write to Cllr. Nicoll to request a local area Traffic Count.
 - Sizewell C – A number of lorries have been detected parking up in unlicensed locations and in lay-bys overnight. The Sizewell team have cracked down on these but please report any you see. Local bus companies are concerned that their drivers may resign and join the Sizewell transport team to transport workers between the Park and Ride sites and the actual SZC Site. There will also be a higher number of workers looking for accommodation, as the onsite caravan park has been scrapped. Finally, the A12 improvements for the development will take many months to complete and will not be in place before the work starts.
 - Funds – I have a healthy pot of funds for local parishes, please let me know if you would like me to assist in funding any Ufford projects.

Action: Clerk

4. To sign Minutes of meeting dated 17th September 2024:

The minutes of the Full Council meeting dated 17th September 2024 had been circulated and there were no further amendments. The minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr. Bennett, seconded by Cllr. Crocker 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

5. Neighbourhood Plan:

a) To discuss the Submission Ufford Neighbourhood Plan – Cllrs. Findley and N Smith explained that the 'Submission' version of the Plan included all the comments raised by the public, statutory bodies and members of the Parish Council both at the meeting on 7th October and afterwards. A final proof read was still to happen but it was hoped, subject to tonight's discussion, that the Plan would be submitted to ESC by the end of the week. The Steering Group were very pleased with the positive comments and how ESC had engaged with the draft Plan. The following comments were made:

- *Is this the absolute final version?* No, it is possible ESC may suggest some tweaks and the Inspector may also want to make some amendments
- *Will an 'Executive Summary' be available? It is a very long document for people to read.* Yes, however the referendum will be on the whole document.
- *Is there a possibility that ESC will have an issue with any part of the Plan?* We don't believe so. They gave the most comprehensive feed-back and Andrea Long - our consultant - has help the Steering Group to answer all their questions or given an explanation as to , in some cases, why we would not be amending the Plan. ESC did request references were added referring to the Local Plan. However, this was resisted by Andrea due to the impending refresh of the Local Plan.
- *What has happened to the Water Meadows?* These have been removed from the Green Spaces list but are now included in a specific Policy.
- *Were there any specific Policy's that ESC objected to?* No. Some they felt needed condensing and that has been done. A Strategic Environmental Assessment was also carried out on the Site Allocation to strengthen the Policy.

b) To resolve to submit the Submission Ufford Neighbourhood Plan and all accompanying documentation to East Suffolk Council for examination – Cllr. N Smith proposed the Parish Council submit the Submission Ufford Neighbourhood Plan and all accompanying documentation to East Suffolk Council for examination. This was seconded by Cllr. Findley and all were in agreement.

Cllr. Findley paid tribute to the members of the Steering Group, both current and retired, the 'foot soldiers' who had assisted with distribution and collection of various surveys, and the Consultants, who had pushed the project along at a healthy pace and carried out a great job.

Action: Clerk

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

- a) DC/24/3286/FUL - Construction of a single storey rear extension at Ivy Cottage, 5 Church Lane, Ufford. The following comments were noted:
- [Cllr. Findley explained the location of the building and the relationship to neighbouring properties]
 - This is a very small rear extension and it is sensible to have a downstairs cloakroom. The Design and Access Statement makes it very easy to understand the proposal and there will be no significant impact on the street scene
 - A new plan was placed on the Portal recently but it must have been for a minuscule amendment as I couldn't tell the difference
 - Number 3 will be able to see the extension but it will have no impact on the residents. It cannot be seen from Post Office Cottages or the Almshouses and there are no neighbours comments on the Portal to date.
 - I would support this application
 - Conclusion: **Support** – (Prop: Cllr. Bennett, Sec. Cllr. Thomas, all agreed)
- b) DC/24/3287/LBC - Listed Building Consent- Construction of a single storey rear extension at Ivy Cottage, 5 Church Lane, Ufford. The following comments were noted:
- As above
 - Conclusion: **Support** – (Prop: Cllr. Bennett, Sec. Cllr. Hawthorne, all in agreement)

Action: Clerk

7. 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 update on possible breach of Planning Conditions at Hungarian Lodge (Building Plot), Lodge Road, Ufford – Number BOPC652098795 – Cllr. Findley explained that a heritage flint wall at the rear of the new bungalow being built in the grounds of Hungarian Lodge, had been knocked down during the utilities connection phase and had been replaced by a modern wooden fence.

This action had been reported to ESC by a resident of Ufford and Cllr. Findley, but the ESC Enforcement Officer had confirmed that no breach of Conditions had occurred yet, as the owner had until the property was occupied to submit details of the boundary structure.

Councillors commented on the inappropriateness of the new wooden fence and that it had a negative impact on the street scene. It was agreed that the Clerk should draft a letter to the Enforcement Officer and have it approved by Council, to send once the DRC application for boundary structure was submitted, if the flint wall had not been rebuilt.

- c) To receive an update on the East Suffolk Communities Energy Partnership – The Clerk confirmed she had written to the ESCEP, as requested at the last meeting, had received an acknowledgement but had not received any further communication.
- d) Additional Item - DC/21/5550/FUL (Erection of a solar photovoltaic (PV) array, with a total export capacity of up to 21 MW. Land At Park Farm Loudham Hall Road Loudham) - Cllr. Findley reported that, following the quashing by Judicial Review of the permission granted on the Loudham Solar Farm, ESC had indicated that a new application would not be required, and that ‘*updated supporting information*’ would be sufficient for the application to be considered again. This decision had been challenged by a local resident, whose letter had been published on the Planning Portal. Cllr. Jones proposed a letter in support of the resident be sent to ESC. This was seconded by Cllr. Findley and all were in agreement. Cllr. Findley agreed to draft a letter for review.

Action: Findley and the Clerk

8. Highways:

- a) To receive an update on the Gas works on High Street and Byng Hall Road – The Clerk reported that she had received confirmation from Cadent that there would be no works during December 2024. Councillors reported that the traffic lights were working well and were controlling vehicle movements without issue.
- b) To discuss the Local Transport Plan for Suffolk to 2040 - Public Consultation – The Clerk encouraged all Members to review the consultation. Cllr. V Smith agreed to review the documentation and produce a draft reply on behalf of the Council.

Action: Clerk

9. Community Hall Upgrade:

- a) To receive update on the refurbishment of the Community Hall Toilets – Cllrs. V Smith and Edworthy reported that the work should be finished by the end of October. Some conflicting comments had been made to the workforce by users of the Hall and Cllr. V. Smith suggested he write to all group secretaries to ask that comments and suggestions were made to him and not the contractor’s workforce.

Cllr. Edworthy indicated that there had been an issue with parking when the Football Club were using the pitch, but that she would speak to the Football Manager.

- b) To receive update on the Electric Vehicle Charging Point – Details of other villages who were potentially embarking on the switch to Connected Kerb had been passed on to Cllr. V. Smith in relation to the possibility of working together with them in seeking legal advice. It was agreed that the Clerk should try to contact these villages, with a view to suggesting that by working together we could share the cost of obtaining independent legal advice.

Action: Clerk

10. Finance Matters:

- a) To receive Accounts as of 30th September 2024 – The Accounts had been circulated and there were no questions. Cllr. Findley had verified the figures shown on the Lloyds Bank account.
- b) To discuss purchase of a Projector to replace UPC machine as it only has a VGA connection – The Clerk explained that the projector that UPC owned only had a VGA connection (the machine often used by the Council actually belonged to Hollesley Parish Council and had to be passed on to their new Clerk). It was agreed that a new machine should be purchased and solely owned by the Parish Council. It was proposed by Cllr. Findley that a machine not exceeding a net cost of £600.00 should be purchased, with 50% of the costs being requested from Cllr. Nicoll. The Clerk agreed to work with Cllr. N. Smith to ensure purchase of the correct device.
- c) To discuss if purchase of a Laptop is required for use with the Projector – After discussion it was agreed that a ‘pool’ Laptop would not be a good idea and all users of the Projector should use their own device, ensuring they had the correct connecting cables.

- d) To authorise the following Invoices for Payment:

i.	J Hallett (Salary and Expenses)	£907.21
ii.	SCC Pension Fund (Clerk’s Pension)	£245.63
iii.	HMRC Cumbernauld (Clerk’s PAYE)	£276.56
iv.	Suffolk Building Society (Funds for Friends of Parklands Wood)	£200.00
v.	St Mary’s Church, Ufford (Hall Hire)	£140.00

vi.	SALC (Payroll Provision)	£57.60
vii.	Thurlow Nunn Standen Ltd (Gasket, Loop handle and Muffler)	£42.15
viii.	Rachel Leggett (NP Stage 4)	£855.00
ix.	Compass Point Planning and Rural Consultants (NP Stage 4)	£1,710.00

The above payments were proposed by Cllr. Jones, seconded by Cllr. V. Smith with Councillors voting all in agreement, that the payments be paid. Cllrs. Jones 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.	HP UK Ltd (New Printer)	£220.00
ii.	Stowe Building Contractors Ltd (Community Hall Refub (Part 1))	£8,715.46

g) To note Payments received since last meeting:

i.	ESC (50% Precept)	£11,910.50
ii.	UK Power Networks (Wayleave)	£44.33
iii.	Transition Rendlesham (Water Testing Grant)	£100.00
iv.	Wickham Market PC (Water Testing Grant)	£100.00
v.	Astco Recycling (Clothes Bank)	£18.00
vi.	A Alexander (Land behind property in Nicolls Close)	£139.14

Action: Clerk

11. Parklands Woods and Recreation Ground:

- a) To receive report on future of Friends of Parklands Wood – A report from Cllr. Hawthorne, on the management of the Woods, had been circulated in September. The members of the Woodlands group were all 10 years older than when first formed and some had dropped out or moved away. Some sessions were only attended by 2 volunteers. Given the possibility that the Parish Council might take on maintenance of some of the woodland area on the other side of The Avenue from Landex, the current FPW group is not resourced to manage this and other arrangements would be required. The recent weather had made unwanted foliage grow much faster and some of the equipment was not up to standard. Other options for assistance had been explored but none were suitable.

Cllr. Findley proposed that Standing Order 3. X) was suspended to allow the business of the meeting to conclude. This was seconded by Cllr. V. Smith and all were in agreement.

A list of required equipment was provided by Cllr. Hawthorne, costing a total of £943.78 (including VAT). After discussion it was agreed that the 'wider picture' needed to be explored, and that piecemeal purchase of equipment might not be the most economical way to manage the woodlands.

However, it was agreed to purchase an attachment for the Brush Cutter to aid with the nettle and bramble clearing and to request a grant from Cllr. Noble for this.

Cllr. Hawthorne reported that the FPW AGM would be held on 2nd November and Cllr. Crocker agreed to provide a list of medically trained residents who might volunteer to be a First Aider. It was agreed that the subject of managing the woods should be placed on the November Agenda, to be discussed early in the evening.

- b) To discuss Anti-Social Behaviour around the Recreation Ground and East Suffolk Services Depot – Cllr. Findley reported that this had much reduced, now that the light evenings were reducing. However, it was also acknowledged that there was still no designated Community Police Officer for the village.

Action: Clerk and Cllr. Crocker

12. Projects List:

- a) Emergency Plan – To receive update from Cllrs. Bennett and Hawthorne – The draft Plan had been circulated and Councillors commented on how compact but clear it was. A few amendments had been suggested and these would be incorporated in a revised draft. Cllr. Bennett reported that both Halls in the Parish would be assessed for their suitability as Rest Centres in early November by the ESC/Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Unit.

Action: Cllrs. Bennett, Hawthorne and the Clerk

13. Documentation – To acknowledge review and adoption of:

- a) Standing Orders (October 2024) – The Standing Orders had been adjusted to be gender neutral, as per a document found on the Gov.UK website. Cllr. Findley proposed it be adopted. This was seconded by Cllr. Thomas and all were in agreement. The Clerk agreed to finalise the document and publish.

Action: Clerk

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

- SALC Forum – Cllr. V. Smith – Cllr. Smith reported that there was still funding available for victims of the 2023 Flooding, until April 2025. It was felt that all households affected had been made aware of these funds.
- Community Partnership Meeting – Cllr. Thomas – Cllr. Thomas reported that the evening had been dominated by two presentations, one on Environmental Mapping and the other on the Sizewell C Community Fund. It was thought this fund was not available to projects in Ufford presently, due to there being a requirement to demonstrate the Sizewell Project had had a negative impact on the village or a facility. However funding may be available in the future.

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

It was agreed to include the following items on the agenda:

- Grant Requests
- Draft Budget

Action: Clerk

The meeting was closed at 9.24pm

Signed:.....

Date:

Cllr. David Findley - Chair

Judi Hallett
Clerk to Ufford Parish Council