

Minutes of Ufford Parish Council Meeting
Held on 19th November 2024 ~ 7.00pm
The Community Hall, The Avenue, Ufford

Present

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

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 from UPC Councillors had been received from Cllr. Vincent Smith (At work) and Cllr. Keith Bennett (Unwell). County Councillor Alexander Nicoll had also sent his apologies.
- b) To Accept Apologies: The apologies of Cllr. V Smith and Bennett were proposed as accepted by Cllr. Jones, seconded by Cllr. Edworthy and all were in agreement

2. To receive any:

- a) Declarations of Pecuniary Interest in Agenda Items
 - Cllr. Thomas – Item 7. d) & e) – Resident of the property in question
 - Cllr. Buxbaum – Item 7. d) & e) – Architect of the proposed development at the property in question
- b) Declarations of Non-Pecuniary Interest in Agenda Items
 - Cllr. Edworthy - Item 11. a) & b) – Trustee of the Community Hall Charity
 - Cllr Hawthorne – Item 5. 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
 - None

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

Chair's initials.....

- Suffolk County Council – Cllr. Nicoll had sent his apologies.

Action: Clerk

4. To sign Minutes of meeting dated 15th October 2024:

The minutes of the Full Council meeting dated 15th October 2024 had been circulated and there were no further amendments. The minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr. Crocker, 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

5. Parklands Wood:

- a) To discuss future management of Parklands Wood – A report from Cllr. Hawthorne had previously been circulated; a separate email setting out options for future support had been circulated by Cllr. Findley. The following comments were noted:
- As previously reported, the original members of the Friends of Parklands Wood (FPW) are getting older and cannot do as much work as they used to. The work can be hard and some volunteers also work on the village footpaths
 - If we take on any more land, for example from the Crown Nursery site, we will need more help
 - The Footpaths VWP could provide more support to path clearance and associated work; there are some members who are currently not involved
 - I believe the footpaths working group should stay independent
 - More Working Parties may be an option, and if at the weekend or on summer evenings may attract working residents
 - Some residents may be keen to give funding, to support outside assistance. Perhaps a fundraising campaign could establish a dedicated fund to use to support the existing woodlands and any other land taken on. This is one of Options set out in the email which should be pursued.
 - If the Neighbourhood Plan works as hoped, we could be looking for specialist help with Allotments and the Orchard, this would require additional resources.
 - There has been some new interest in the FPW but not the level of commitment needed going forward.
 - What about asking Farlingaye High School if Duke of Edinburgh Award participants would like to volunteer? This could be part of their DoE Community Service

In conclusion it was agreed to set up a small Working Group to explore the Options and report back to the next meeting. The group would consist of Cllrs. Hawthorne, Edworthy, Crocker, Thomas and Linforth plus Barry Searle and/ or another member of the FPW group.

On a separate note, Cllr. Hawthorne reported that the new Management Plan had been started and a £1,500 grant would be claimed once the Plan was finished. Cllr. N Smith reported that a tree surgeon had recently moved in to the old Notcutts Nursery off Old Bredfield Road and they were keen to be involved in village activities.

Action: Clerk

6. Finance Matters:

- a) To receive Accounts as of 31st October 2024 – The Accounts had been circulated and there were no questions. Cllr. Bennett had been asked to verify the figures shown on the Lloyds Bank account and the Clerk agreed to chase this.
- b) To receive notification of Bank Charges starting 14th January 2025 – The Clerk explained that Lloyds Bank had notified the Council that, with effect from 14th January 2025, a small amount of bank charges would be applied to the Current Account. This was likely to be under £5.00 each month. Councillors felt this was inevitable and it was not worth changing banks.
- c) To discuss Grant Requests for April 2025 payment – The list of grants requested had been circulated. After discussion the following grants were proposed by Cllr. Jones, seconded by Cllr. Thomas and all were in agreement:
 - St Mary’s Church Flowers - £300.00
 - Ufford Players - £200.00
 - St Mary’s Ufford PCC - £650.00

It was agreed that a further £100.00 would be granted to the Community Hall, should they not be able to obtain a grant for the Community Coffee Mornings from Cllr. Noble; the Clerk was asked to notify all applicants.

- d) To discuss the draft Budget for 2025/26 and the suggested Precept request – The draft budget and draft Precept request amount had been sent to all, following discussion by the Finance Councillors. Each line was analysed and discussed. The Clerk was asked to make a couple of adjustments and re-present the Budget at the December meeting. All Councillors were asked to consider the figures before the meeting, in particular the potential rise in the Precept.

The Clerk was asked to look up when the rents for the Tennis, Football and Community Hall were due for renewal and report.

- e) To authorise the following Invoices for Payment:

i. J Hallett (Salary and Expenses)	£1,315.76
ii. SCC Pension Fund (Clerk’s Pension)	£397.62
iii. Ufford Community Hall (Hall Hire)	£40.00
iv. Thurlow Nunn Standen Ltd (Consumables for Woodlands)	£15.83
v. Stowe Building Contractors Ltd (Community Hall Toilets)	£11,933.83
vi. CPC Ltd (Projector)	£677.88

The above payments were proposed by Cllr. Edworthy, seconded by Cllr. Hawthorne with Councillors voting all in agreement, that the payments be paid. Cllrs. Jones and Edworthy 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. The Notice Board Company (Notice Board)	£1,705.15
ii. Stowe Contractors (Community Hall Toilets)	£14,999.12
iii. Ms R Forge (Fuel and Work Boots)	£59.18
iv. Suffolk County Council (Shade on Lamp Post)	£90.00
v. D Findley (Water Testing Consumables)	£67.20

g) To note Payments received since last meeting:

i. SCC (Grant for Notice Board)	£950.00
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Action: Clerk

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

a) DC/24/3102/TPO - A1 of TPO No. 31 / 1957 1no. Poplar (marked on plan) - Fell - Parkside, Lower Road, Ufford – *to ratify decision taken via email*. The following comments were noted:

- Comments collated via E-Mail
- Conclusion: **No TPO Application required as tree not old enough** – (Prop: Cllr. Findley, Sec. Cllr. Hawthorne, all agreed)

b) DC/24/3150/VOC - Variation of Condition 2 of DC/22/0837/VOC (Front and side extensions, remodelling, conversion and associated works) - To revise the approved scheme to reduce scale and costs of proposed works. To remove reference to drawing 1679/30A and replace with drawing TRD-16-02. - Cambrai House, High Street, Ufford - *to ratify decision taken via email*. The following comments were noted:

- Comments collated via E-Mail
- Conclusion: **No Comment** – (Prop: Cllr. N Smith, Sec. Cllr. Linforth, all in agreement)

c) DC/24/3491/FUL - Single storey rear extension and relocation of existing raised deck – Foxgloves, The Avenue, Ufford. The following comments were noted:

- This application is somewhat similar to those already approved for two other recent bungalow extensions in The Avenue
- The plans are not easy to interpret and there now appear to be stairs in the building.
- There is no Design and Access statement and the viewing platform now appears to be much bigger. However, the development is to the rear and there have been no comments from neighbours
- Conclusion: **No objection** – (Prop: Cllr. Findley, Sec. Cllr. Hawthorne, all agreed)

d) DC/24/3877/FUL - Removal of existing single storey back porch, small sunroom and hall and reconstruction as two storey extension at Ufford House, Barrack Lane, Ufford. The following comments were noted:

- *Cllrs. Thomas and Buxbaum left the meeting*
- This development is similar to the previous plans, but now is two storey rather than single.
- The present porch is in a poor condition and needs replacing
- There is a very thorough Design and Access Statement in the plans and this will improve the building
- This small rebuilt extension will not be visible from the road or by any neighbours and the development is in keeping with the current building.
- Conclusion: **No objection** – (Prop: Cllr. Jones, Sec. Cllr. Findley, all agreed)

e) DC/24/3878/LBC - Removal of existing single storey back porch, small sunroom and hall and reconstruction as two storey extension at Ufford House, Barrack Lane, Ufford. The following comments were noted:

- As above
- Conclusion: **No objection** – (Prop: Cllr. Jones, Sec. Cllr. Findley, all agreed)
- *Cllrs. Thomas and Buxbaum re-entered the meeting*

Action: Clerk

8. 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) Pettistree Solar Farm – To receive update on the outcome of Judicial Review – Cllr. Findley explained that he had had correspondence with Mr Ben Woolnough (Head of Planning and Coastal Management, ESC) regarding this development. These had concluded that there would be no new application, following the decision of the Judicial Review, but that further information would be made available and there would be a re-consultation. He had not committed to involve all local parishes who had made comments previously. Mr Woolnough had suggested writing to the developers to request a wider consultation than just with nearby properties. Council agreed to this proposal.
- c) Hungarian Lodge bungalow – To receive notification of the demolition of a heritage wall – Further correspondence to Mr Woolnough had revealed that the rebuilding of the heritage wall could be enforced under Condition 11 of the permission.

Action: Findley and the Clerk

9. Neighbourhood Plan:

- a) To receive an update on the Ufford Neighbourhood Plan – Cllr. N Smith reported that the Plan would go out for Regulation 16 Consultation from the following day. The Clerk agreed to advertise this on the Website and via PUNCHLine.

10. Highways:

- a) To discuss the Local Transport Plan for Suffolk to 2040 - Public Consultation – The Clerk reported that the reply as drafted by Cllrs. V Smith, N Smith and Findley had been sent off. Cllr. N Smith further explained the detail in the Plan.
- b) To discuss writing to Cllr. Nicoll to request a Traffic Count is undertaken on The Avenue and School Lane (approx.. cost £450.00) – Concern was expressed that any Traffic Count would show very few speeding drivers (as evidenced by the low number detected in this area by the Community Speed Watch Group). It was suggested that any persistent offenders were noted and their details passed to the Police. After discussion it was agreed not to request a survey.

Cllr. Findley reported that he was hopeful that the team monitoring traffic movements as part of the Sizewell C construction, would be adding two locations in Ufford in 2025. A proposal for traffic monitoring in the High Street and on Lower Street/ Eyke Road was being considered by the SZC Traffic Review Group (TRG).

The Clerk also notified Council of the Active Travel Woodbridge project and agreed to circulate the details for individuals to comment.

- c) To discuss ESC consultation on the ‘Licensing of Jet Ski/water scooter Commercial Operators’ – Council felt that there should be no jet skies in the Deben Estuary due to the nature of other river users and the impact on wildlife and the environment. Cllr. Findley agreed to draft a letter of reply and circulate. Individual Councillors were also urged to reply to the consultation.
- d) To receive the Footpaths Report and discuss increasing the number of volunteers – The latest report had been circulated and the Clerk was asked to thank Ms. Forge for her ongoing work, and that of Mr Churchyard. It was acknowledged that the Paths Cutting Machine may need a new belt in the near future.

Action: Clerk and Cllr. Findley

11. Community Hall Upgrade:

- a) To receive update on the refurbishment of the Community Hall Toilets – Cllr. Edworthy reported that the project was finished, with just a few minor actions to be taken. It was agreed that the final invoice (yet to be received) would be held until all snags were rectified once the work was completed.
- b) To receive update on the Electric Vehicle Charging Point –Cllr. V. Smith was not in attendance and the Clerk agreed to contact him after the meeting to obtain an update to circulate to all.

Action: Clerk

12. Projects List:

- a) Emergency Plan – To receive update from Cllrs. Bennett and Hawthorne – Cllr. Hawthorne reported that both Halls had been assessed and designated as being suitable to be Rest Centres in the event of an emergency. A minor adjustment to the Plan had been suggested by ESC and it would then be circulated, ready for sign off at the December meeting. Cllr. Findley reported that there would be a ‘holding article’ in the December PUNCH (requested by the Editor as it would be the 1 year anniversary of Storm Babet) with a much fuller article in the new year.
- b) River management – To receive an update on the Lower Deben Riparian Owners Group and on progress with ESRT "Recovering the Deben from Source to Sea" project – Cllr. Findley gave details of a new group of local land owners/farmers who had formed and were meeting regularly. Their work would include investment in management of the River Deben and associated waterways and liaison with DEFRA.

Action: Cllrs. Bennett, Hawthorne and the Clerk

13. Documentation – To acknowledge review and adoption of:

- a) Anti-Harassment And Bullying Policy (November 2024) – This draft document had been sent to all for review. Subject to the correction of two typographical errors, Cllr. Jones proposed it be adopted. This was seconded by Cllr. N Smith 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:

- SZC Southern Transport Forum - verbal report on meeting held on 13th November 2024 – Cllr. Findley – Cllr. Findley – Cllr. Findley gave a full report on the latest meeting of this group including work at the Orwell Logistics Park and the two Park and Ride sites. There was also due to be a Wickham Market Traffic Calming Scheme and new traffic flow monitoring sites in Ufford should be approved in April. Cllr. Findley reported that Ufford would be included in the consultation about traffic calming measures
- In addition, work on the ecological and archeological assessment for the Two Villages By-pass had started and work to the Melton Rail Crossing was planned for 2025. The latter is likely to lead to significant disruption for local traffic.

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

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

- Budget and Precept for 2025/26
- Meeting dates for 2025

Action: Clerk

Under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public were excluded from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed

The Clerk left the meeting

Chair's initials.....

16. Staff:

- a) To receive report from Cllrs. Jones and Findley on Clerk's Annual Review – Cllr. Jones gave a summary of the annual review and all Councillors expressed their thanks to the Clerk for her ongoing work.
- b) To ratify decision to implement Pay Rise for the Clerk, as suggested by NALC/SLCC, back dated to April 2024 – This was proposed by Cllr. Jones, seconded by Cllr. Findley and all were in agreement.
- c) To discuss amending Clerk's Pay regime from 4 or 5 weekly to monthly – After discussion this was agreed and the Clerk was asked to notify SALC.
- d) To discuss removing Clerk's additional three hours pay for work on the Neighbourhood Plan, with effect from 31st December 2024 – It was agreed that, with effect from 1st January 2025, the Clerk would return to being paid 12.5 hours per week (54.17 Hours per month). Any significant additional hours relating to the Neighbourhood Plan undertaken in 2025 would be recorded and either paid as one off overtime or time taken in lieu.

The Clerk returned to the meeting

The meeting was closed at 9.00pm

Signed:.....

Cllr. David Findley - Chair

Date:

Judi Hallett
Clerk to Ufford Parish Council

Chair's initials.....