

Minutes of Ufford Parish Council MeetingHeld on 21st January 2025 ~ 7.00pm

The Community Hall, The Avenue, Ufford

Present

Cllr. David Findley (Chair)

Cllr. Pat Edworthy

Cllr. Angela Linforth

Cllr. Tig Thomas

Cllr. Keith Bennett

Cllr. Jane Hawthorne

Cllr. Nigel Smith

Cllr. Nick Crocker

Cllr. Kathryn Jones

Cllr. Vincent Smith

District Councillor Sally Noble (*part*)Judi Hallett (Clerk) – *via Zoom due to illness*

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. Tim Buxbaum (Previous engagement). County Councillor Alexander Nicoll had also sent his apologies.
- b) To Accept Apologies: The apologies of Cllr. Buxbaum 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. Findley – Item 5. c) v. – Refund of expenditure
- b) Declarations of Non-Pecuniary Interest in Agenda Items
 - Cllr. V Smith - Item 8. a) & b) – Treasurer of the Community Hall Charity
 - Cllr. Edworthy - Item 8. a) & b) – Committee Member of the Community Hall Charity
 - Cllr. Hawthorne – Item 9 – 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*):
 - None

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

- East Suffolk Council - Cllr. Noble report on the following items:
 - Sizewell items have been under discussion, lots of transport infrastructure activity including Park & Ride at Wickham Market and Darsham, 2 Village bypass and Yoxford roundabout. Offices on site have now been constructed and we are running out of time to get things into the DCO. Final funding is not there yet and accommodation is going to be an issue. ESC have to get another 1,200 bed spaces provisioned for Sizewell works. Note that we do not want all the hotels and holiday space occupied at the expense of tourist and holiday people. There is no information on accommodation for families and services such as doctors and dentists.
 - Devolution issues are also to the fore, and it is not known what the Councils will look like in 2 years' time. Lots of worries about what the unitary system will look like and how it will work. Who will be the Councillors looking after parish councils and will Parish Councils have to do more?
 - Locally, we are losing skilled people from ESC to Sizewell so overall the ESC capability to support and turn around work is diminished. This is especially the case in Planning.
 - As a parish council if we have anything to talk about to the ESC energy team, get in touch with Sally, or contact the energy team directly.
 - On a more positive note, nature at work, finally agreed signage to be produced and will be placed in February and expanding sites for re-wilding, tree planting, bird and bat boxes is underway and Cllr Noble is requesting information and offers for new and more sites.
 - Also the final signoff on the Four Rivers project is expected within days; another key element of the Environment portfolio
 - Clerk asked that we record thanks to Cllr Noble for the grants for the woodlands tool and the Projector
- Suffolk County Council – Cllr. Nicoll had sent his apologies. Cllr. Findley proposed thanks were sent to Cllr Nicoll for taking up UPC's case with SCC Highways, to get the disruptive highway diversion plans changed from Lower Road to The Avenue.

Action: Clerk

4. To sign Minutes of meeting dated 7th January 2025:

The minutes of the Full Council meeting dated 7th January 2025 had been circulated and there were no further amendments. The minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr. Hawthorne, seconded by Cllr. N. Smith 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.

Cllr V Smith highlighted that the action as recorded in the December 2024 minutes for a letter to be sent to Caroline Topping had not yet been completed. This was acknowledged.

Action: Clerk

The meeting was suspended for approximately 10 minutes during a power cut

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5. Finance Matters:

- a) To receive Accounts as of 31st December 2024 – The Accounts had been circulated and there were no questions. Cllr. Bennett had verified the figures shown in the Lloyds Bank account via an email to all.

Cllr V Smith stated that the UCH monies have not yet been credited to UPC accounts. It was agreed that this money would be as a grant contribution to the Parish Council and the Clerk agreed to circulate the details of where this was shown in the accounts.

- b) To review the Internal Controls observed by the Council and the Appropriateness of the Internal Auditor – As requested, the Clerk had sought advice from the Internal Auditor, Mr Trevor Brown. He had recommended a number of controls, the majority of which were already being followed by the Council. It was however recommended that the Council appoint a ‘Councillor Internal Controller’ to carry out additional checks of the Accounts. Cllr. Bennett agreed to carry out this task and his appointment was proposed by Cllr. Jones, seconded by Cllr. Edworthy and all were in agreement. It was unanimously agreed that having this new position in place resulted in the Council having the correct financial internal controls in place.

With reference to the appropriateness of the Internal Auditor, Cllr. Findley proposed Mr Trevor Brown was totally appropriate. This was seconded by Cllr. Bennett and all were in agreement.

- c) To authorise the following Invoices for Payment:
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|---|---------|
| i. J Hallett (Salary and Expenses) | £840.24 |
| ii. SCC Pension Fund (Clerk’s Pension) | £214.60 |
| iii. East Suffolk Services (Annual Grass Cutting) | £638.40 |
| iv. Ufford Community Hall (Hall Hire) | £80.00 |
| v. D Findley (Water Testing Consumables) | £67.20 |
| vi. Stowe Building Contractors Ltd (Hall Toilet Refurbishment) ¹ | £354.95 |

The above payments were proposed by Cllr. Hawthorne, seconded by Cllr. Edworthy with Councillors voting all in agreement that the payments be paid, with the exception of Cllr. Findley who abstained. Cllrs. Bennett and Edworthy agreed to authorise the online payments the following day and the Clerk agreed to forward all invoices to them.

- d) To note Payments made since last meeting:
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|------------------------------------|---------|
| i. HMRC Cumbernauld (Clerk’s PAYE) | £484.96 |
|------------------------------------|---------|
- e) To note Payments received since last meeting:
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|---|---------|
| i. Astco Recycling (Clothes Bank) | £10.00 |
| ii. Woodbridge Town Council (Boules Grit) | £240.00 |

Action: Clerk

¹ Agreed when item 8. a) was discussed

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

- a) DC/21/5550/FUL | Erection of a solar photovoltaic (PV) array, with a total export capacity of up to 21 MW at Land At Park Farm, Loudham Hall Road, Loudham:

Cllr Findley updated the members on the latest position (details had been circulated). It was remarked that the application is still a live planning application, but nothing had been formally placed with ESC or on the Planning Portal since the 'quashing' of first approval. However, the developer, BSR Energy, has now agreed to hold a consultation event, which is most likely to be held in Pettistree village hall at some time in near future.

Cllr V Smith suggested that UPC should still write to ESC, to request they take charge of the consultation, in addition to developers own exercise. Cllr. Findley explained that environmental assessments must still be conducted by ESC and the developer. The 'receptor' sites must also be assessed as viewpoints and a 21 day consultation must be held. Cllr. V Smith proposed that this process should be in writing and Cllr. Findley agreed to write to head of Planning at ESC (Ben Woolnough) to re-assert our position on this.

Action: Cllr. Findley

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 acknowledge receipt of pre-application consultation details re a proposed Care Village along Yarmouth Road, Melton – The Clerk had forwarded details on 7th January to all with the outline proposals. Christchurch Land and Estates (Melton) Ltd - the 'Developer' - are conducting their own consultation exercise of local people for a 64 bedroom care home and a number of freehold bungalows. The Clerk details her first-hand knowledge of their approach from Melton Parish Council's (MPC) direct involvement and would keep UPC informed.

The current proposal is very similar to a previous application that was refused by ESC Planning and again at appeal.

Cllr. Findley asked if UPC should respond to the developers consultation but it was agreed that UPC would not respond until an official application was made. The Clerk did agree to circulate a recording of a meeting between the Developers and MPC, if they permitted this.

Action: Clerk

8. Community Hall Upgrade:

- a) To receive update on the refurbishment of the Community Hall Toilets – Cllr. V Smith reported that the work was now complete and suggested the retained funds (£354.95) were released to Stowe Building Contractors Ltd. This was proposed by Cllr. Crocker, seconded by Cllr. Linforth and all were in agreement.

Cllr. V Smith advised that the Hall Committee would be making an appropriate grant to the Parish Council to assist with the funding of the project. A vote of thanks was passed to Cllrs Edworthy and V Smith for all the work that they had done to facilitate the project.

- b) To receive update on the Electric Vehicle Charging Point – Cllr. V. Smith asked that this matter be deferred until the February meeting because there were some elements in the contract that were not clear. Cllr V Smith reported he had written to SCC asking for explanations, but could not, at this point, recommend UPC or the Hall Committee sign any documentation.

Action: Cllr. V Smith

9. Recreation Ground/Woodlands:

- a) To discuss writing to Anglian Water re. the Sewer Pipes that run beneath the Recreation Ground - Cllr Findley explained the background to this action and the recent leaks from foul water drains. Many Councillors had concerns about any potential remaining problems and it was therefore resolved to write to Anglian Water to ask if the problems have been fully resolved, what caused the problem, and if there were any ongoing actions required as a result of the leakage, to protect the safety of the users of the recreation ground.
- b) To receive an update on the Management of the Woods and to discuss/agree support from a Woodlands Consultant on the draft Woodlands Management Plan - Cllr Hawthorne updated the meeting on the draft Woodlands Plan. It would be a 10 year plan and, once agreed a grant of £1,500 would be available to the Council. Mrs Anne Westover had been asked to review the plan before submission to the Forestry Commission, especially the section on 'Futures'. The cost for this would be £150 (max) and Cllr. Findley proposed this be a worthwhile expenditure to ensure the plan was fit for purpose. This was seconded by Cllr. Jones and all were in agreement.
- c) To discuss working with HM Prison Service to work in the Woods – Cllr. Hawthorne asked that this item be deferred until she could speak fully with HMP Hollesley Bay staff and arrange a site visit with them

Action: Cllr. Findley

10. Highways – To receive an update on the Joint Parishes Transport Initiative (JPTI):

Cllr N Smith reported that the next meeting was due to take place with ESC on 3 February and highlighted a number of points:

- Rock Barracks – Briefing on the planned relocation of 70 Gurkha Parachute Squadron to Rock Barracks. This had been raised in terms of traffic generation, but there are wider community implications and opportunities also.
- Data and Monitoring (Inrix Data) (Ben/Luke) – Update on the regular monitoring and use of Inrix data
- Infrastructure Funding Statement (Ben) – Feedback on Infrastructure Statement inclusion and development of a CIL Bid.
- Feedback on potential measures identified to alleviate traffic on A1152 (All) – Discussion about inclusions in a CIL Bid.
- Bentwaters - monitoring update (Tim/Ben) – Update on the voluntary monitoring on the base.
- Sizewell transport update (Tim) – Latest update from Transport Forum on impacts of Sizewell C
- Local Plan process and Statement of Community Involvement (Ben) – Learning from last Local Plan process and a first discussion about the process for involvement in the next local plan.
- ESPA meeting on 24th January, 3.30 pm at Castle Community Rooms, Church St, Framlingham IP13 9BQ

11. Projects List:

- a) To receive details from a resident of an offer to refurbish the Stocks (materials cost only) and to discuss process for obtaining permission – Cllr. Findley explained that local resident had offered to carry out some restoration work on the stocks, if we would agree to provide necessary materials. There had been some concerns as the Stocks were Grade 2 listed and so permission from ESC planning (listed consent) would need to be sought. Cllrs Findley, Thomas and Buxbaum have visited the stocks and there had been some contact with the ESC Heritage officers, who had some concerns that heritage features should be retain wherever possible. It was agreed to defer this items to the February meeting, where Cllr. Buxbaum could advise.

Action: Clerk

12. Documentation – To discuss draft additional text to the Standing Orders re. appoint of Trustees to other bodies:

The revised additional text for the Standing Orders was proposed by Cllr. V Smith, seconded by Cllr. Thomas and all were in agreement. The Clerk agreed to add the following text to the document and re-publish:

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27. Appointment of Trustees to external Bodies

- a. As and when required, the Members will appoint such persons as they feel are fit and proper to represent the Council on external bodies (including the Town Estate Charity (Ufford) and the Ufford Community Hall Charity). These appointments will be made in line with the rules of each Body.
- b. The appointed persons may be a current Member of the Council or a resident of the village.
- c. All appointed persons will be notified to the Clerk/Secretary of the respective Body within 21 days of the appointment.
- d. All appointed persons will be expected to make an annual report to the Council

Action: Clerk

13. Council Administration - To re-consider moving to a 'gov.uk' domain for the website and Council e-mail address:

This item was deferred until the February meeting, when the Clerk could be present.

Action: Clerk

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

- Reports on meetings with Landex and BSR Energy were given elsewhere

15. To receive agenda items for next meeting and agree date of Next Meeting (18th February 2025):

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

- Items carried forward
- Review of the Risk Registers

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

16. To discuss Policy UFF16 in the Draft Ufford Neighbourhood Plan and engagement with Land owner:

Notes taken during this matter are available to Members only

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

The meeting was closed at 9.29pm

Signed:.....

Cllr. David Findley - Chair

Date:

Judi Hallett
Clerk to Ufford Parish Council

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