

Minutes of Ufford Annual Parish Council Meeting

Held on 20th May 2025 ~ 7.00pm

The Parish Hall, Church Lane, Ufford

Present

Cllr. David Findley (Chair)

Cllr. Keith Bennett

Cllr. Nick Crocker

Cllr. Pat Edworthy

Cllr. Rilla Forge

Cllr. Kathryn Jones

Cllr. Angela Linforth

Cllr. Nigel Smith

Cllr. Tig Thomas

District Councillor Sally Noble

Judi Hallett (Clerk)

Five members of the public were present

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting

1. To elect the Chair of the Council for 2025/26 and signing of the 'Declaration of Acceptance of Office':

Cllr. Findley stated that he would be willing to act as Chair for one further year, but not beyond that. Cllr. Edworthy proposed Cllr. Findley as Chair. This was seconded by Cllr. Linforth and, there being no other nominations, Councillors voted unanimously in agreement. Cllr. Findley signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

2. Apologies for absence:

- a) To Receive Apologies: Apologies from UPC Councillors had been received from Cllr. Vincent Smith (Away), and Cllr. Tim Buxbaum (Away). Apologies had also been received from County Councillor Alexander Nicoll.
- b) To Accept Apologies: The apologies of Cllr. V Smith and Buxbaum were proposed as accepted by Cllr. Findley, seconded by Cllr. Thomas and all were in agreement.

3. To receive any:

- a) Declarations of Pecuniary Interest in Agenda Items
 - None
- b) Declarations of Non-Pecuniary Interest in Agenda Items
 - Cllr. Edworthy – Item 15 a) – Secretary of the Community Hall
- 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.....

4. Public Session:

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

- DC/25/1561/FUL – A single person spoke for all five residents regarding their opposition for this proposed motorbike garage development. Concern around loss of trees, noise, precedent, and effect on carbon neutral status of site were all listed as reasons for objection. When questioned, the residents reported that there were no covenants on the properties to prevent a planning application being submitted. They also mentioned that a Residents Committee was to be set up but was not established yet and that the loss of the trees would affect the resident's view from the site towards Pettistree. The residents were thanked for attending and for submitting their views directly to ESC.

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

- East Suffolk Council - Cllr. Noble had issued a report and expanded on the following items:
 - DC/25/1561/FUL – Cllr. Noble had met the residents and fully supported them on all grounds listed; she stated that she has asked ESC Planning to have this application called into Planning Committee. She also stated that she had made a request for a TPO to be placed on the trees on the northern boundary of the site.
 - NSIP – Full details on my report but I am now Deputy Leader of this group.
 - Four Rivers Project – this is being launched later in the week and support is now available for water testing.
 - Sealink Project – Do attend the briefing if you can.
 - Devolution – Consultation currently underway by District and Borough Councils – all views welcome. County Council are pushing for one single unitary council, where others would like two or three.
- Suffolk County Council – Cllr. Nicoll had sent his apologies but had offered to take any questions outside the meeting.

5. To sign Minutes of meeting dated 15th April 2025:

The minutes of the Full Council meeting (including the Confidential Minutes) dated 15th April 2025 had been circulated. The minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr. N Smith, seconded by Cllr. Bennett 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

6. To elect the Vice- Chair of the Council for 2025/26 and signing of the 'Declaration of Acceptance of Office':

It was agreed to defer this item to the June meeting, when Cllrs. V Smith and Buxbaum could be in attendance.

Chair's initials.....

7. To advise Members to review their entry on the ESC Register of Interests Website:

The Clerk requested that all Members reviewed their entry on the ESC Register of Interests and all present agreed to do so.

8. To confirm all Standing orders and Direct Debits presently set up for the Council:

The Clerk confirmed that the following Direct Debit was set up on the Bank Account (no Standing Orders):

- Information Commissioners Office - £47.00 per annum

Cllr. Edworthy proposed this payment continue. This was seconded by Cllr. Bennett and all were in agreement.

9. To agree all Councillor Responsibilities for 2025/26:

The table of responsibilities was completed and the Chair thanked all for their willingness to step in to the different roles. The Clerk was asked to complete the table and distribute it after the meeting.

10. To receive confirmation that the Clerk has completed the Pension Regulator Re-Enrolment process:

The Clerk had forwarded evidence of compliance with the Pension Regulator Re-Enrolment process and this was noted.

11. To appoint persons to the following offices:

The following appointments were made:

- a) Responsible Finance Officer – Mrs Judi Hallett
- b) Tree Warden – Mr Rob Flory
- c) Footpaths Warden – Cllr. Rilla Forge (*max 6 months*)
- d) SALC Representative (+ meetings) – Cllr. Vincent Smith
- e) Internal Auditor – Mr Trevor Brown
- f) Maintenance Officer – Mr Steven Churchyard
- g) Ufford Community Hall representative(s) – Cllr. Pat Edworthy and Cllr. Vincent Smith
- h) Representative of ESC Community Partnership – Cllr. Angela Linforth
- i) Friends of Parklands Wood representative – Cllr. Rilla Forge

The Clerk agreed to advertise the position of Footpaths Warden. The above appointments were proposed by Cllr. Findley, seconded by Cllr. Jones and all were in agreement. The Clerk agreed to contact those persons outside of the Council.

12. Finance Matters:

- a) To receive and agree Accounts to 30th April 2025 – The Accounts had been prepared and circulated. There were no questions and Cllr. Bennett had reviewed the papers and entries as part of his Councillor Internal Controlled role.
- b) To receive update on the CCLA Account – The Clerk reported that she had calculated that £8,000.00 could be transferred to CCLA, as, barring any emergencies, these funds would not be required for the day-to-day running of the Council before the second half of the Precept was received. This transfer had previously been agreed and Cllrs. Findley and Bennett signed the transfer form.
- c) To authorise the following Invoices for Payment:
- | | |
|---|-----------|
| i. J Hallett (Salary and Expenses) | £949.78 |
| ii. SCC Pension Fund (Clerk's Pension) | £215.21 |
| iii. Imperative Training Ltd (Defib Pads) | £186.00 |
| iv. Groundwork UK (NP Grant Return) | £784.60 |
| v. St Mary's Church Flowers (Grant 2025) | £300.00 |
| vi. Ufford Players (Grant 2025) | £200.00 |
| vii. St Mary's Ufford PCC (Grant 2025) | £650.00 |
| viii. CCLA (Transfer of Funds) | £8,000.00 |
| ix. Westcotec Ltd (2 x SID Batteries) | £210.60 |
| x. D Findley (Water Testing Tests) | £67.20 |
| xi. Graham Allen (IT Technician) | £82.50 |

Cllr. Findley declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 12. c) x. as he would be receiving a refund of expenditure he had made.

The above payments were proposed by Cllr. Jones, seconded by Cllr. Crocker with Councillors voting 8 in favour that the payments be paid, with 1 abstention. Cllrs. Jones and Edworthy agreed to authorise the online payments and inspected the invoices.

- d) To note Payments made since last meeting:
- i. None
- e) To note Payments received since last meeting:
- i. ESC (Precept) £13,053.00
- Action: Clerk**

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

- a) DC/25/1561/FUL - Erection of garage for motorbike storage - 5 Thornborough Park, High Street, Ufford. Councillors made the following comments:
- Details were given of a site visit carried out by one Parish Councillor, Cllr. Sally Noble and a number of neighbours to the property.
 - Councillors commented that very good letters of objection from nearby residents had already been submitted

- Clerk was asked to request a TPO was placed on the trees and hedging along the northern boundary of the site.
 - After full discussion it was agreed to object on the following grounds:
 - Scale of the development (enough for 20 motorbikes)
 - If permitted the Carbon Neutral nature of the development would be compromised
 - Effect on residential amenity of noisy motorbikes
 - Precedent
 - History of the site (including appeal decisions) and the fact that it is outside the Settlement Boundary
 - Loss of trees and ecological habitat
 - Comments made on original ecology report
 - Conclusion: **Objection** (Prop: Cllr. Jones, Sec: Cllr. Forge, all in agreement)
- b) DC/25/1765/VOC Variation of Condition No. 2 of DC/23/0480/FUL - Extension & refurbishment of bungalow - Addition of dormer windows - Oakdene, School Lane, Ufford. Councillors made the following comments:
- These are big Dormer windows and the plans are disingenuous in that they are comparing these with what already has permission and not what is there presently
 - There is concern for the bungalow next door, this house is very large and overbearing; a total overdevelopment of the plot
 - The design is not in line with the Design Guide within the Ufford Neighbourhood Plan, soon to be adopted.
 - Conclusion: **Objection** (see grounds above) (Prop: Cllr. N Smith, Sec: Cllr. Jones, all in agreement)

Action: Clerk

14. 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 a proposed Care Village along Yarmouth Road, Melton – The Clerk reported that three Melton Councillors had visited a sister site to that of the facility proposed in Melton to see how the care village operated. She had been informed by the applicant that the application had been presented to ESC but that it was not on the Planning Portal as yet.
- c) To receive update on BSR Energy Consultation re. Pettistree Solar Farm – Cllr. Findley reported that the last entry on the Planning Portal was from Nov 2024 and there had been no further information on the Historic Impact Assessment.

Action: Clerk

15. Community Hall Upgrade:

- a) To receive update on the Electric Vehicle Charging Point and to approve signing documentation if appropriate – The Clerk read a statement from Cllr. V Smith indicating that SCC had confirmed that Connected Kerb were not willing to install a separate meter for the EV charging point, and therefore the point had been withdrawn from the Suffolk EV process.

16. Recreation Ground/Woodlands:

- a) To receive an update on the Management of the Woods and draft Woodlands Management Plan – Cllr. Forge reported:
- The old carpets and broken benches at the BMX track had been cleared by a number of volunteers and the items stacked by the Redwood Terrace Car Park – Clerk to arrange collection
 - A resident of Ufford had offered to take on management of the BMX track, but would need help regarding litter, benches and track improvements – It was agreed that this should be on the June agenda
 - Work continued to improve the visual impact of the woods.
 - Minor Anti-Social Behaviour incidents in the woods and at the Recreation Ground were an ongoing issue
 - A quote of £1,160.00 for the major tree works had been received from a local Tree Surgeon. After discussion Cllr. Forge proposed this be accepted. This was seconded by Cllr. Edworthy and all were in agreement – Cllr. Forge agreed to contact the Tree Surgeon.
- b) Additional Item – Water issue – Cllr. N Smith reported that the water leak in Parklands Wood had been reported to Anglian Water but that they had denied it was a mains water issue. Cllr. Findley agreed to work with Cllr. N Smith to resolve the issue.

Action: Cllr. Forge and Clerk

17. Highways:

- a) To discuss placing of a Memorial Bench at the East Lane Triangle – The Clerk reported that a resident of East Lane had asked to fund a memorial bench, to be placed on the triangle of land at the junction of East Lane and Loudham Lane, in memory of her husband. After debate it was agreed that that was a very good idea and that SCC should be approached and asked if this was possible.
- b) Additional Item – Sogenhoe Chapel Cross and Plaque – Cllr. Findley reported that the old wooden cross at Sogenhoe Chapel had been repaired and it was felt a plaque dedicated to Tony Prentice would be appropriate. The Clerk was asked to review the lease on the land, to ascertain how deep the cross could be buried in the ground.

Action: Clerk

18. Documentation – To review and adopt the following Policies:

- a) UPC Standing Orders (May 2025)
- b) UPC Financial Regulations (May 2025)
- c) UPC Councillor Internal Controller Policy (May 2025)
- d) UPC Risk Assessment (Financial) (May 2025)

All four policies were taken together. Cllr. Crocker proposed they be adopted. This was seconded by Cllr. Linforth and all were in agreement. The Clerk was asked to finalise and publish them.

Action: Clerk

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

- Cllr. Edworthy –Community Engagement Event – Lottery funds will shortly be available specifically for Village Halls and areas linked to the age group 16 to 25. A bid for funding for a new kitchen in the Community Hall would be going in.

20. To receive agenda items for next meeting and agree date of Next Meeting (17th June 2025):

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

- Items carried forward
- BMX Track
- Landex Exhibition

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

21. 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.

The meeting was closed at 9.01pm

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

Date:

Judi Hallett
Clerk to Ufford Parish Council

Chair's initials.....