

## **Minutes of Ufford Parish Council Meeting**

Held on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2025 ~ 7.00pm

The Parish Hall, Church Lane, Ufford

### **Present**

Cllr. David Findley (Chair)

Cllr. Keith Bennett

Cllr. Tim Buxbaum (from 7.03pm)

Cllr. Nick Crocker

Cllr. Pat Edworthy

Cllr. Kathryn Jones

Cllr. Angela Linforth

Cllr. Nigel Smith (from 7.12pm)

Cllr. Vincent Smith

Cllr. Tig Thomas

County Councillor Alexander Nicoll

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. Rilla Forge (Away).
- b) To Accept Apologies: The apologies of Cllr. Forge were proposed as accepted by Cllr. Crocker, seconded by Cllr. Bennett 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
  - None
- 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 had issued a report.

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*Chair's initials.....*

- Suffolk County Council – Cllr. Nicoll was thanked for his work on ensuring the resurfacing of Bridge Street was extended to Lower Street and he reported on the following items:
  - £8m grant secured by SCC to improve bus services – this will hopefully see improvements in Melton and Sutton Heath/Bromeswell
  - Active Travel Woodbridge – Alterations to the central Woodbridge scheme were being discussed and this will hopefully make the centre of Woodbridge safer.
  - Sizewell C – Please report any large vehicles you see outside the A12, which you suspect are involved in the Sizewell C project. There have been particular issues with large lorries from Newall transporting supplies to Sizewell C.
  - Q. *Will the controversial plans for 'Love Woodbridge and Melton' be going ahead?* Active Travel is now concentrated on Woodbridge but there is a strong need to ensure any alterations in Woodbridge do not have an adverse effect on neighbouring parishes, including Ufford.
  - Q. *How much of the cost of running buses is actually covered by fares?* I don't have the actual figures but much bus travel is subsidised as fares alone do not cover all the costs.

**4. To sign Minutes of meeting dated 20<sup>th</sup> May 2025:**

The minutes of the Full Council meeting (including the Confidential Minutes) dated 20<sup>th</sup> May 2025 had been circulated. The minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr. Jones, 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**

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

Cllr. V Smith indicated he would be willing to stand as Vice-Chair for one year, but indicated he was not committing to stand as Chair in May 2026. Cllr. Linforth proposed Cllr. V Smith as Vice-Chair. This was seconded by Cllr. Crocker and all were in agreement. Cllr. V Smith signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

**6. Finance Matters:**

- a) To receive and agree Accounts to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2025 – The Accounts had been prepared and circulated. There were no questions and Cllr. Bennett agreed to review the figures online after the meeting. The Clerk reported that the CCLA required a form to be completed, to allow them to accept transactions via email. Cllr. Linforth proposed that the form be completed and signed. This was seconded by Cllr. V Smith and all were in agreement. The form was completed and signed.

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*Chair's initials.....*

- b) To discuss continuing with the Zoom subscription (cost rising to £13.99 per month from 1st June 2025) – After debate, Cllr. Bennett proposed the subscription to Zoom was cancelled, for the time being. This was seconded by Cllr. Linforth and all were in agreement. The Clerk was asked to cancel the subscription.
- c) To confirm UPC wished to continue to use Mr Trevor Brown as Internal Auditor, given details of fees – Having seen Mr Brown’s fee charging schedule Cllr. Jones proposed the Council confirm the appointment of Mr Brown as the Internal Auditor for 2025/26. This was seconded by Cllr. Edworthy and all were in agreement. The Clerk was asked to notify Mr Brown.
- d) To authorise the following Invoices for Payment:
- |                                                               |         |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| i. J Hallett (Salary and Expenses)                            | £848.59 |
| ii. SCC Pension Fund (Clerk’s Pension)                        | £215.21 |
| iii. R Forge (Reimbursement of Fuel Costs for Woodland Group) | £15.69  |
| iv. Thurlow Nunn Standen Ltd (Various Items for Woods)        | £129.96 |
| v. Steven Churchyard Maintenance)                             | £200.00 |

The above payments were proposed by Cllr. V Smith, seconded by Cllr. Linforth with Councillors voting all in favour that the payments be paid. Cllrs. Bennett 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. Alford Storage (Clothes Bank) £11.00

**Action: Clerk**

**7. 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 – revised plans. Councillors made the following comments:
- The ESC Tree Officer has confirmed the Silver Birch that would need to be felled is not a specimen tree and would not qualify for a TPO
  - The location is very prominent on the street scene and the building is still very large
  - Neighbours and Cllr. Noble have objected
  - There were many trees on the site sacrificed for the building work, we should not lose another
  - If permitted, this will set a precedent for other garages on the site.
  - If permission is granted, we should request a condition that makes hedge planting a requirement of the permission.

It was agreed to continue to object on the following grounds:

- Scale of the development and precedent
- If permitted the Carbon Neutral nature of the development would be compromised
- Effect on residential amenity of noisy motorbikes

- History of the site (including appeal decisions) and the fact that it is outside the Settlement Boundary
- Loss of trees and ecological habitat and Comments made on original ecology report
- Conclusion: **Objection** (Prop: Cllr. Jones, Sec: Cllr. Thomas, 9 for, 1 abstention)

b) DC/25/1483/OUT - Outline Application (Some Matters Reserved) - Care Village comprising a 64 bedroom care home (use Class C2) together with 40no assisted care bungalows (Use Class C2) associated facilities, bowling green, car parking, open space provision with associated infrastructure and access - Land Off Yarmouth Road, Melton. It was acknowledged that this development was outside of Ufford, but would still have a great impact on Ufford, were it to be permitted. Councillors made the following comments:

- [The complex history of the site was explained as a reminder to existing Councillors and briefing for new Councillors]
- Comments from the local surgeries are very concerning; their stance is that there is insufficient capacity in local GP practices to cope with the projected demand from such a large frail elderly population
- This proposal is smaller than the previous two but it will still mean a significant loss of green space between Melton and Ufford
- The scheme is at completely at odds with Ufford's Neighbourhood Plan which states that any proposals which imply coalescence with neighbouring parishes will not be supported.
- We perhaps do need this type of elderly care accommodation in the region but this is the wrong location. These residents will be isolated and all visitors and staff will have to arrive by car
- The narrow pavements and hills between the site and the village will make travel by foot, cycle or mobility scooter to and from Melton very dangerous, the existing pavement is only suitable for walking.
- There are over 10 care homes in the area already, has the need actually been proven?
- Conclusion: **Objection** (see grounds above) (Prop: Cllr. Thomas, Sec: Cllr. N. Smith, 9 for, 1 abstention). It was agreed that the Clerk should draft a letter based on the previous objections in 2020, and circulate for review.

**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. It was questionable as to whether or not a response had been received to the Council's query regarding being party to a S106 agreement. The Clerk agreed to circulate the response again.

- b) To receive update on BSR Energy Consultation re. Pettistree Solar Farm – Cllr. Findley reported that the last entry on the Planning Portal was still from Nov 2024 but that the Heritage Impact Assessment should be on the Portal shortly and a full re-consultation by ESC had been agreed by Mr Ben Woolnough. Cllr. Findley agreed to write again to Ben Woolnough to seek reassurances about the extent of consultation process.

**Action: Cllr. Findley/Clerk**

#### **9. Neighbourhood Plan:**

- a) To receive feedback on the Landex Exhibition – Cllr. Findley reported that 45 residents had attended the exhibition and he thanked the UPC members who had attended to answer any questions. The majority of views were positive and Councillors were reminded that they could still comment on the proposals, on the Landex website. The Landex staff present had taken on board comments regarding the ultimate design of the properties and layout. It was understood that the Pre-Application papers had been submitted to ESC and would be forwarded by the Clerk as soon as they had been received.
- b) To discuss scope of 'Terms of Reference' for 'Ufford Neighbourhood Plan Implementation Group' – UNPIG – Cllr. N Smith reported that he had carried out research in to NP Implementation Groups and that these came in various shapes and sizes. He circulated a list of possible roles that the group could cover and asked members to review and comment via email back to him; with a view to holding a full discussion at the July meeting. The Clerk was asked to send a PUNCHLine on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> June, reminding residents of the referendum vote on 26<sup>th</sup> June.

**Action: Clerk**

#### **10. Recreation Ground/Woodlands:**

- a) To receive an update on Woodlands Management – Cllr. Forge had provided a report to the Clerk, which was read out. The Clerk was asked to report the stolen bench to the Police and to ESS, that the grass in the Under 8's area of the Play Park was severely overgrown.
- b) To discuss scope of 'Terms of Reference' for FPW – It was agreed to defer this matter to the July meeting, when Cllr. Forge could be present.
- c) To discuss the external resource locker and its continued use – Cllr. Findley reported that further damage had been done to the external resource locker. After discussion it was agreed to retain the locker and review the contents, keep things deemed useful and recycle the rest.
- d) To discuss the following items relating to the BMX Track:
- Refuse Bins
  - Track Improvements
  - Benches

It was suggested the Clerk speak to the new manager of the BMX track and ask if he would be prepared to attend the July meeting and give his views on work required to the track.

Action: Cllr. Forge and Clerk

**11. Highways:**

- a) To receive an update on placing of a Memorial Bench at the East Lane Triangle – The Clerk reported that SCC had agreed in principle to allowing a bench, but were just clarifying land ownership.
- b) To receive an update on the Sogenhoe Chapel lease and placing of the new Wooden Cross – The Clerk reported that she had not heard back from SCC but would write again.

Action: Clerk

**12. Quarterly Health and Safety Review – To receive notification of any H&S matters and to add to Action List** – there were no incidents to report.

Action: Clerk

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

- Cllr. N Smith – *Sizewell C Southern Transport Group* – Attendees to the STF were shown a drone footage video of the current construction works and this demonstrated the shocking amount of destruction of the countryside required for the project. There were also updates on improvements to rail crossings and paths.
- Cllr. Edworthy – *Village Halls Meeting* – CAS volunteers are ready and willing to help with projects; a grant for the new Kitchen will be submitted once all quotes have been received, the new lobby carpet will be laid next week and the Bottle Banks would be removed once household recycling was in place.

**14. To receive agenda items for next meeting and agree date of Next Meeting (15<sup>th</sup> July 2025):**

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

- BMX Track
- UNPIG
- CIL Projects List
- Woodlands Terms of Reference

Action: Clerk

The meeting was closed at 9.04pm

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

Date: .....

Judi Hallett  
Clerk to Ufford Parish Council

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Chair's initials.....