Minutes of Ufford Parish Council Meeting

Held on 20th October 2026 at 7.00pm
The Community Hall, The Avenue, Ufford

Present

Cllr. Vincent Smith (Chair)	Cllr. Nick Crocker	Cllr. Pat Edworthy
Cllr. Rilla Forge	Cllr. Angela Linforth	Cllr. Nigel Smith
Cllr. Murray Thomas	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 had been received from Cllr. David Findley (away), Cllr. Keith Bennett (away), and Cllr. Tim Buxbaum (work). Apologies had also been received from County Councillor Stephen Molyneux and District Councillor Sally Noble.

b) To Accept Apologies: The apologies of Cllrs. Findley, Bennett and Buxbaum were proposed as accepted by Cllr. Crocker, seconded by Cllr. Linforth 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
- Cllr. V Smith – Item 12 - Treasurer to the Community Hall
- Cllr. Edworthy – Item 12 – Trustee to 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

3. Public Session:

a) Reports or comment from any members of the public:
- N/A

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

- East Suffolk Council - Cllr. Noble had given her apologies but her September report had been circulated and she had offered to take any questions outside the meeting.

- Suffolk County Council – Cllr. Molyneux had given his apologies and had offered to take any questions outside the meeting. The Clerk was requested to ask the following questions to Cllr. Molyneux:
    i. Does the delay to LGR alter your views on any aspect of Council life, due to your term being extended to four years?
    ii. Could we ask your views on the project to re-open the PRoW at Hawkeswade Bridge?

Action: Clerk

4. To sign Minutes of meeting dated 15th September 2026:

The minutes of the Full Council meeting dated 15th September 2026 had been circulated. The minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr. N Smith, seconded by Cllr. M Thomas 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.

The Clerk read the following statement in Cllr. Findley's absence:

"Having read the September Minutes, and as River Warden and a Councillor, I would like to clarify that at present the next phase in the Ufford Breach recovery work is still at the planning stage. No decisions have been made about the PROW/ footbridge crossing nor about the future flow pattern at the Ufford Hole.

This is a complex multi-party project involving the landowner, LDOG (Lower Deben Owners Group) Parish Councils and range of agencies - Environment Agency, Essex and Suffolk Rivers Trust, Suffolk County Council Rights of Way - and delivery partners such as the Water Management Alliance (formerly the Internal Drainage Board). Any work to be done will almost certainly require a FRAP (Flood Risk Activity Permit) to be granted by the Environment Agency."

Cllr. Findley was thanked for this clarification.

Action: Clerk

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

a) Proposed Base Station Upgrade at Grove Farm, Ufford - Consultation Telecoms Site GROVE FARM (Ref: CS 10990122) – The following comments were made:

- This is replacing old equipment, already on site
- No objections, as long as Mr Rolph is also in agreement
- Conclusion: **No Objection, as above** (Prop: Cllr. V Smith, Sec: Cllr. T Thomas, all in agreement).

b) DC/26/3354/TPO - A1 of TPO No. 31 / 1957 1no. Beech (T001 on plan) - Crown reduce in height by 1 metre and in radial spread by 75cm - The Walk, Lower Road, Ufford – The following comments were made :
- [Comments from the Tree Warden were read by the Clerk]
- This is a very small scale reduction, it is likely to need re-cutting again next year
- Conclusion: **'No objection'** (Prop: Cllr. N Smith, Sec: Cllr. Forge, all in agreement).

c) DC/26/2384/OUT - Outline Application (all matters reserved except access) for a phased development of up to 150 dwellings, including self/custom-build dwellings, a local centre, car parking, landscaped open space incorporating sustainable drainage features, associated infrastructure, allotments and a community orchard - Land At Redwald Road, Rendlesham – The following comments were made :
- The proposed access, through Honours Meadow, is totally inappropriate and will be dangerous
- We recently agreed to put our names to the JPTI letter regarding the seemingly continuous expansion of housing and industry in the Rendlesham area, this will just add to it
- The additional traffic movements will add to the gridlock at Melton and will result in more vehicles travelling through Ufford to access the A12
- There have been 55 objections so far; not one letter of support
- We support the objections by Rendlesham and Melton Parish Councils
- This will have a devastating impact on local services (schools, doctors, dentists, etc.)
- This is known locally to be a very wet area, and there will be issues with drainage
- These additional houses will have a grave impact on the residents of Honours Meadow
- The loss of another wildlife rich site will further damage the environment
- Conclusion: '**Object**' on the above grounds (Prop: Cllr. Linforth, Sec: Cllr. Forge, all in agreement).

d) DC/26/3552/TPO - A1 of TPO No. 31 / 1957 1no. Spruce (marked on plan) - Fell 1no. Pine (marked on plan) - Fell 1no. Silver Birch (marked on plan) - Reduce lowest limb by 1.5 metres 1no. Willow (marked on plan) - Reduce lowest limb by up to 3 metres - Green Garth, Ufford Place, Ufford – The following comments were made :
- [Comments from the Tree Warden were read by the Clerk]
- We agree with the Warden's comments
- Conclusion: **No Objection** (Prop: Cllr. Linforth, Sec: Cllr. Forge, All in agreement).

Action: Clerk

6. Other Planning Matters:

a) To acknowledge previous months list of ESC Planning decisions – There were no further comments about this report.

b) To receive notification of the Local Plan timetable and the re-opening of the Call for Sites – The Clerk informed members that ESC had re-opened their Call For Sites. Due to not obtaining the required number of potential development sites after the first round. She also informed members that the Local Plan timetable had been published and the consultation regarding the possible sites, and the draft new Local Plan, was scheduled to happen in May 2027. The Clerk was asked to make a diary note for April 2027, to ensure the Council took part in the consultation.

c) To receive update on the refurbishment of the Stocks and Whipping Post – Item deferred to November meeting.

d) *Additional item* - DC/25/2945/FUL - Land At Dingley Dell Lower Road Melton – The Clerk was asked to forward the correspondence received from ESC Trees and Landscape Team, regarding placing a TPO on the land at this location, to a resident who had attended the meeting when comment was determined.

Action: Clerk, and Cllr. Buxbaum

7. Community Emergency Plan Review – To receive details from working group:

a) To discuss and adopt the revised Plan – The Plan was displayed and a number of questions were answered. Cllr. M Thomas detailed a CEP webinar that he and the Clerk had attended, and found useful but had not learnt anything new that needed to be included in the Plan. Adoption of the Plan was proposed by Cllr. Forge, seconded by Cllr. Crocker and all were in agreement. The Clerk was asked to finalise the document and send to the correct authorities, and then produce a redacted document to publish on the Website.

b) To agree communication of plan to Ufford residents and relevant bodies outside village – The following course of action were agreed:

- Clerk to place redacted Plan on the website and add details in the style of the Melton PC page
- A PUNCHLine to be sent out (with Cllr. T Thomas placing the same message on HUG)
- Plan to be promoted at the APM 2027
- Clerk to request 50 fridge-magnet advice cards from SCC. If these were not available, to request printing of a number (a budget of £60.00 was proposed by Cllr. V Smith, seconded by Cllr. M Thomas and all were in agreement). These would also be distributed at the Summer Show.
- Cllr. M Thomas to organise a desktop exercise to run through the plan in a mock emergency.

Action: Clerk

8. Highways:

a) To receive details of the consultation on implementing a 20 Mph speed limit within certain parts of the village – The Clerk had collated all comments received during the consultation, had circulated these to the members and also displayed them on a screen during the meeting. The following comments were noted:

- I have undertaken a number of test runs on various roads in the village and it is very difficult and reckless to drive at more than 20 Mph already, especially on the roads around the White Lion
- This is a very quiet village where you can often walk in the road without seeing a vehicle.
- I think larger vehicles give a perspective of speed, even when they are not speeding
- It is obviously different for residents whose houses are much closer to the road.
- Looking at the data, so few residents replied to the consultation [43 or 6% of those on electoral register] that we do not have a mandate to take this project forward. Of the 43 responses, 27 (63%) were in favour but that represents just 4% of the population of Ufford.
- The thought of more signage is horrifying and it would all need to be maintained.

In conclusion, it was proposed by Cllr. M Thomas, seconded by Cllr. Crocker, with all in agreement, that the Council did not have a clear mandate to take the proposal forward. The Clerk was asked to draft comms on this matter, for review, and to provide clear stats based on ESC population data. It was also agreed that the comments received would be made available to anyone who requested them. However, it was agreed that some further steps could be taken (see below).

b) To discuss concerns from a resident of Lower Street regarding traffic volumes, vehicle sizes and speeds – Correspondence from a resident of Lower Street had been collated and sent to all members, and was also displayed on the screen during the meeting. Members noted the significant concern of residents who lived close to the road, especially where large farm vehicles and tractors passed by.

It was acknowledged that although many drivers of large vehicles were considerate, others were not. It was agreed that, in the first instance, the Chair would write to all farm managers in the area, to request their assistance in asking all drivers to pass more slowly through the village, especially where houses were close to the road.

Action: Clerk and Cllr. V Smith

9. Clerk – To discuss Clerk's Pay Grade, following receipt of advice from SALC:

[The Clerk left the room during the discussion on this item]

It was unanimously agreed (Prop: Cllr. V Smith, Sec: Cllr. M Thomas) to increase the Clerk's Pay Scale to SCP24 (from SCP17), with effect from 1st January 2027. This was in recognition of the Clerk's level of responsibility and aptitude.

The Clerk sincerely thanked the members for this decision. The Clerk was also asked to draw together a succession plan, that could be used when she decided to retire from her role.

10. Finance Matters:

a) To receive and agree Accounts to 30th September 2026 – The Accounts had been prepared and circulated and there were no further questions.

b) Initial discussion of draft budget for 2027/28 as prepared by the Clerk – The first draft of the budget was displayed and discussed. The following initial adjustments were suggested:
- Funds to be set aside each year, to review the Neighbourhood Plan in 2029/30, should be £3,000
- Funds set aside for work in the Woodlands should be £6,000.
- The budget for the playpark inspections and maintenance should be separated from that for the woodlands

The Clerk was asked to adjust the draft budget for re-examination at the November meeting, when the Council Tax Base figure would be available.

c) To review Clerk's suggestion to move £5,000 from Lloyds to CCLA – After discussion Cllr. Edworthy proposed that £5,000 was moved from Lloyds to CCLA, as soon as practical. This was seconded by Cllr. Forge and all were in agreement.

d) To authorise the following Invoices for Payment:

i.	J Hallett (Salary and Expenses)	£918.69
ii.	SCC Pension Fund (Clerk's Pension)	£241.85
iii.	HMRC Cumbernauld (Clerk's PAYE and NI)	£460.18
iv.	HC Slingsby Plc (Grit Bin)	£242.40
v.	SALC (12 months payroll service)	£129.60
vi.	Thurlow Nunn Standen Ltd (Oil and Saw Cleaner)	£57.35
vii.	Ufford Community Hall (Hall Hire)	£63.00
viii.	Suffolk Prestige Security Ltd (New Lobby CCTV Camera)	£456.00

The above payments were proposed by Cllr. N Smith, seconded by Cllr. M Thomas with all Councillors voting in favour that the payments be paid. Cllrs. Linforth and Edworthy agreed to authorise the online payments and inspected the invoices.

d) To note Payments made since last meeting:

i.	J P Fleming and Sons (Grant for work on River Deben)	£1,500.00

e) To note Payments received since last meeting:

i.	Alford Storage (Clothes Bank)	£28.00
ii.	Lloyds Bank Plc (Interest)	£4.24
iii.	CCLA Investment Income	£104.64
iv.	ESC (50% of Precept)	£13,862.50
v.	UK Power Networks (Wayleave on poles in woodlands)	£44.33
vi.	Letheringham PC (Contribution to Water Testing)	£100.00
vii.	C Alexander (Land Rent)	£149.33

Action: Clerk

11. Recreation Ground/Woodlands:

a) To receive an update on Woodlands Management (report from Cllr. Forge) – Cllr. Forge reported:

- Many more hours work in the woods completed (the equivalent to 828 hours since 1st Jan 2026)
- Invasive species removed and paths clearer
- ESS have been very helpful in clearing some brambles with their mechanical equipment
- Saturday working parties have resumed, with some volunteers transitioning to the Monday group.
- AGM will be on 7th November, 9.30am start with a Bug Hotel built in the woods afterwards

Cllr. Forge was congratulated on the superb state of the woods. The Clerk was asked to review when the Chain Saw use certificates were obtained, and when certification expires.

Action: Clerk and Cllr. Forge

12. Community Hall - To receive monthly update on management of the Hall:

Cllr. V Smith reported on the following items:

- Bookings for the hall are looking healthy (Clerk encouraged to book PC meeting dates for 2027)
- Issues with the drains and broadband were currently outstanding
- New heaters were still required – *advice offered by Cllr. Forge*
- Football club had not been using the pitch. The Clerk was asked to arrange a one off cut of the field before winter and contact the Football Manager to ask if they were intending to use the pitch this year

Action: Clerk and Cllr. V Smith

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

- Meet the Army – The Clerk reported that she had attended a 'Meet the Army' conference at Trinity Park. A number of senior officers had presented to around 200 attendees, including the Mayor of Ipswich and many IBC, SCC and ESC officers and Members. The Armed Forces Covenant was promoted and the Clerk was asked to circulate details.

- Future Meetings – Attendance at the forthcoming meetings were noted:
    - Cllr. V Smith – Bromeswell Community Meeting and Melton/Bromeswell/Ufford meeting to discuss common message re. work to River Deben
    - Cllr. Linforth – Community Partnerships Meeting
    - Cllr. N Smith – SCC Traffic Monitoring Modelling and Full JPTI

Action: Clerk

14. To receive agenda items for next meeting and agree date of Next Meeting (17th November 2026):

It was agreed to include the following items on the agenda of the November meeting:

- Budget 2027/28
- BMX Track Proposal
- Meeting Dates for 2027
- River Deben work
- Football Club and use of pitch

Cllr. V Smith commented that a number of requests from residents had been sent directly to members of the Council recently, and these had then all been discussed at a meeting. It was agreed that, in future, any request from a resident should be forwarded to the Clerk, she would then circulate and ask if members wished to discuss the matter. Should they wish to, the matter would be placed on to the agenda at the next convenient opportunity. Should they not wish to, the Clerk would reply to the resident, thanking them for their correspondence and noting that the matter would be taken no further.

Action: Clerk

15. To resolve that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed:

a) Former Crown Nursery – To discuss Viability Assessment submitted to ESC on the former Crown Nursery land – The Clerk was asked to write to Mr Short to ask if he felt a meeting between himself, Landex and the Parish Council would be of use.

Action: Clerk

The meeting was closed at 8:55pm

Signed:……. Date: ……..
Cllr. Vincent Smith - Chair

Judi Hallett
Clerk to Ufford Parish Council
