



**DRAFT Minutes of the Urchfont Parish Council (UPC) Meeting held on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2015 in the Conference Room of Urchfont Village Hall**

**Present: Councillors:** Mottram (DM - Chairman), Donald (BD), Mitchell (NM), Thomas (RT), Day (GD), Hill (TH), Clifton-Page (LCP), Gibb (HG), Baker (PB), Holt (SH) and Stephens (AS)

**Clerk to the Council:** Lunn (BL) **Planning Administrator:** Johnston (SJ)

**Councillor for Urchfont & The Cannings:** Philip Whitehead (PW)

**Members of the Public (for all or part of the meeting):** Richard Hawkins, Penelope Ellis, David Wyatt, Kate Walters

1. **Welcome by the Chairman** – the Chairman welcomed councillors and the public to the meeting.
2. **Apologies:** all councillors were present
3. **Declarations of Interest:** None declared
4. **Talk & Q&A by David Wyatt (WC Tree & Landscape Officer)** – David gave an overview of his 35 year background in tree management around the world. He now covers 1400 square kilometres of middle Wiltshire dealing with tree preservation orders (TPO's) and planning applications to preserve the landscape and try to ensure that not too many trees are lost. He reviews and makes recommendations on tree planting schemes taking a long term view to limit future liabilities. He has delegated authority to issue TPO's and to take enforcement action where necessary. He then answered a number of questions from councillors.

**5. Minutes the Meeting of the Council held on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2015.**

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Decision
To approve and sign the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting.	BD	NM	Unanimously agreed

6. **Action List Status Review (see attached) and Update Reports from the Minutes of 11<sup>th</sup> November 2015** – see updated action sheet attached.

**7. Finance:**

**a. To receive Financial Statement and Bank Reconciliation as at 30<sup>th</sup> November 2015** – BL confirmed that the statement and bank reconciliation had been circulated to all councillors prior to the meeting. Current forecasts indicate an end of year reserve of £12,257.

**b. To review projects progress and approve any proposals received**

- i. **Pond Electrics** – RT confirmed that he had asked for £1500 to be included in the 2016/17 budget to cover completion of electrical installations including provision of sockets into Pond Green for Scarecrow Festival and other users. He had appraised a number of electricity supply proposals and recommended taking on OVO who will install the supply on the basis of a £100 per year business standing charge and reasonable unit charges. Once this supply installation is complete then the electrical pillar work can be completed. Scarecrows will consider a contribution to this cost post the Festival in May 2016; it is intended that electricity users will be charged based on metered usage.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Decision
To initiate a supply contract with OVO to facilitate use of the electrical pillar and wider Pond Green electricity supply	RT	BD	Unanimously agreed

**ACTION: FC/90/15 - RT**

- ii. **Top Green Seat Refurbishment** – NM advised that she had received a quote from MDN to remove, clean, paint and replace the bench of £285 + VAT, this is the same cost as for earlier refurbishment of benches on Pond Green. PB indicated that he may be able to negotiate a reduction in this price. It was agreed that the work should go ahead as soon as possible, BL indicated that it could be paid for from 2015/16 funds.

**ACTION: FC/91/15 - PB**

c. **Precept and Budget 2016/17 preparation** – BL reported that he had circulated version 2 of the draft budget prior to the meeting but had subsequently drawn up version 3 due to additional information having been received. He emphasised the fact that the real decision required at this meeting was on the level of Precept to be demanded from Wiltshire Council and the associated effect on local council tax rates in 2016/17. Version 3 was based on a Precept demand which would have zero effect on council tax rates in 2016/17 and included a number of proposed projects with ballpark estimates. Dependent on the Precept decision, the budget would be tweaked to work within overall funds available. The presentation also included an illustration of the effect on local council tax ranging from zero to a 4.78% increase on band D properties (+£4.04).

Debate subsequently centred on the criticality and level of Precept demand needed and ranged from the view that no increase in council tax rates should apply to the need to put up tax rates to one extent or another to cover proposed projects and demonstrated improvements in the Parish, especially if additional restrictions might apply to Precept demand levels post 2016/17. PW confirmed that whilst unitary authorities had been capped at 1.99% this year, he did not envisage capping would apply at Parish level in the foreseeable future. Two proposals were then made as follows:

Proposal 1	Proposer	Seconded	Decision
To demand the level of Precept which will result in no increase in local council tax rates in 2016/17	GD	NM	Rejected – 4 for, 5 against, 1 abstention

Proposal 2	Proposer	Seconded	Decision
To demand the level of Precept which will result in a 1.99% increase in local council tax across all house bands	DM	PB	Agreed – 8 for and 2 against

BL was tasked to amend and circulate the budget and to demand the Precept from Wiltshire Council by the due date in accord with the agreed Proposal 2.

**ACTION: FC/92/15 - BL**

## 8. **Lead Councillor, Clerk & other written Reports (attached on website)**

- a. **Web Site** - no comments on or updates received to submitted reports
- b. **Liaison with Army Ranges** - no comments on or updates received to submitted reports
- c. **Farmers Field including liaison with FOFF** – DM believed that the Council should encourage the proposed working relationships between voluntary groups in the Parish. It was suggested that the new lead councillor should discuss this further with Charlotte Hill-Baldwin. BL expressed his thanks to Charlotte for this written report.

**ACTION: FC/93/15 - BD**

- d. **Cemetery** - no comments on or updates received to submitted reports
- e. **Clerks Report** - no comments on or updates received to submitted reports

## 9. **Working Groups: written reports (attached on website)**

- a. **Community Access and Travel Plan Working Group (WG)** – NM reported that she had received an interim response from WC on the capital grant application; unfortunately it will not include the Crookwood Lane layby or the proposed pathway on the playing field side of the School driveway. Having spoken with the School Head Teacher, Mrs Talbot has agreed to respond to WC agreeing to the proposals for Top Green modifications to

the bank. The Crookwood Lane Layby needs to be a stand-alone UPC project, BL confirmed that he had included some funding in the 2016/17 budget. On this basis she made the following proposal:

Proposal	Proposer	Seconded	Decision
That the task given to the Working Group had now been completed and as such it should be disbanded	NM	LCP	Unanimously agreed

DM thanked the WG for their hard work and achievements.

**b. Section 106 Working Group** – No written report - see Agenda Item 13

**10. Update on WC matters**

**a. PROW to Playing Field** – BD read out his report as follows:

The second meeting of this working group took place on 26<sup>th</sup> November, chaired by Wiltshire Council and represented by the school, board of governors and UPC. Good progress was made to come up with a suitable route for a PROW round the edge of the school buildings that would meet any legislative requirements. Richard Broadhead, of Wiltshire Right of Ways, presented the first draft of a proposed route, which through the removal of a hedge, delivers a solution that:

1. Provides a 2 metre wide path
2. Minimises to only a few square yards the loss of current school hard standing area
3. Does not require the relocation of the bike shed
4. Should not require any action regarding the oil tank

It was agreed that there was insufficient space to run the path all the way down to the main road without crossing the school drive. Some more thought and discussion is required to determine exactly where this crossing should be located. The next meeting is to be held in early February 2016.

**The Chairman closed the meeting for public participation.**

Richard Hawkins expressed his support for Council action on this issue, he considered the School / Governors article in the December issue of Redhorn News to be fundamentally wrong and gave biased and misleading information to the wider community distribution.

**The Chairman re-opened the Council meeting.**

BD pointed out that the consultation period had ended at about the same time as the December issue of Redhorn News was distributed.

**b. Playing Field CAT** – BL read out the three options contained in an email he had received from John Price dated 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2015 (circulated to all councillors prior to the meeting), summarised below:

Option 1 – transfer land west of the blue line on the plan straight away (basically the recreation ground / tennis courts.

Option 2 – Transfer as for Option 1 straight away and seek approval of the Secretary of State to transfer the rest of the playing field except for the defined by legislation School green play area (within red line on map).

Option 3 – Seek approval of the Secretary of State to transfer the land covered by Options 1 and 2 as a single phase.

Following discussion of the relative pros and cons for each Option, the following proposal was made.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconded	Decision
To adopt Option 2 with rights of access through the remaining playing field owned by Wiltshire Council land'	RT	GD	Unanimously agreed

BL was tasked to inform John Price of this decision.

**ACTION: FC/94/15 – BL**

(Post meeting Note – email sent to John Price on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2015)

**11. Manor Farmyard – SH reported on four matters as follows:**

a. **Possible infringement of planning approval** – it has been alleged that the house on Plot 1 (thatched house) has been built some 50cms higher than approved in the planning application. The WC Planning Officer is investigating and taking this very seriously, as is Redcliffe Homes. If an error has been made then UPC must ensure that appropriate enforcement action is taken by WC.

b. **Adoption of road and associated collection of bins from within development** – SH reported that a lot of emails had been received about wheelie bins being left outside the development. This will not be resolved until the internal road is adopted by WC and the waste / recycling vehicles can enter the development, this cannot happen until all building works have been completed. SH believed that adoption will be achieved prior to completion of Plot 19.

c. **Way forward on Plot 19** – The plot has still not been sold, there is some concern that it could eventually be bought by an inappropriate builder. DM expressed the view that UPC should write to Redcliffe Homes to express disappointment with the fact that they are not going to complete the demolition and rebuild of Plot 19, SH agreed to draft such a letter.

**ACTION: FC/95/15 - SH**

d. **Pond Wall** – following discussion between Redcliffe Homes and the management company, it is understood that a planning application will be submitted shortly to regularise the position on condition and maintenance responsibilities.

**12. Lead Councillor Roles** – DM had circulated an updated listing following discussion at the informal event on 19<sup>th</sup> November, this was reviewed and agreed at the meeting. It was further agreed that nominated lead councillors in specific topic groupings should discuss, agree and notify responsibility for each constituent role to BL.

**ACTION: FC/96/15 – ALL**

It was agreed that the revised listing should be published on the website and notice boards, further that the updated listings should be referred to in the January edition of Redhorn News.

**ACTION: FC/97/15 - BL**

**13. Section 106** – AS expressed big thanks to Emma Beaumont and Kate Walters who have worked hard to negotiate a robust case for the funding. Kate Walters then outlined the basis of the proposed Playdale design which is considered the best of three quotes received for the following reasons; the design of the recreation area was displayed:

- Playdale were the only bidders who visited the site to look at inspect equipment and area available.

- The robust playground equipment is made of wood and metal with 15 and 25 year warranties respectively
- It is considered that their design makes best use of the space available.
- Separate play areas are provided for toddlers and older children
- Considered to be good value for money
- Provides alternative play equipment to that already available at the Primary School

Kate handed out a proposal document which compares the quotes received from three suppliers.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconded	Decision
To support the proposal and recommendation to use Playdale subject to WC agreement for 106 funding. BL to apply for funding as soon as possible.	RT	PB	Unanimously agreed

**ACTION: FC/98/15 – BL**

(Post Meeting Note – application for funding submitted to WC on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2015)

At the same time as trying to negotiate further discounts from Playdale, and not knowing how long it would take to achieve funding approval from WC, it was suggested that the Company be asked to extend the validity of their quote until the end of March 2016.

**ACTION: FC/99/15 - AS**

**14. Neighbourhood Plan** – SH reported that we are now in the final 7 week consultation period; comments have so far been received from 15 households. The WC Link Officer has stated that the WC Area Development Manager considers the Plan to be good. All consultation period comments will be considered by the Steering Group and appropriate amendments made to the Plan before it is passed to the Parish Council in January 2016 for endorsement and submission to WC. SH was of the view that UPC only needs to ‘rubber stamp’ the Plan as it has been prepared in accord with the agreed terms of reference and there have been plenty of opportunity for public consultation. If councillors still have comments on the Plan then they should make these as a member of the public during this consultation period; another chance to comment will come during the referendum following WC consideration. BD advised that a number of comments had been received about the change control chapter, this will not be removed but require some wording changes.

**15. External Meetings** – DM reported that he and SH had attended a meeting with Worton Parish Council who are seeking advice on neighbourhood plan preparation. SH commented that Chirton Parish Council had also asked whether UPC could prepare their plan, this has been declined.

**16. Councillors’ Reports and Items for Future Agenda**

- NM reported that HG had produced a very nice card which had been used to welcome residents in Manor Farmyard and to tell them about Christmas decorations on Pond Green. It is also intended to use the card for the proposed ‘Parish welcome pack’.
- RT thanked all those who assisted with the erection of Christmas lights along the pond wall.
- PW reported that works in The Bottom had been completed to try and prevent flooding; the contractors had done an excellent job. DM said that residents would be writing to WC acknowledging completion of the work.
- Due to an oversight on the part of the Village Hall, the next scheduled FC meeting cannot be held on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2016. Options are to delay until the 27<sup>th</sup> January or cancel. Endorsement of the Neighbourhood Plan could be an issue, but this could be undertaken by email. Discussion concluded that the January meeting will be cancelled.

**Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 10th February 2016 in Urchfont Village Hall Conference Room commencing at 7.00pm**

**Meeting Closed at 10.30pm**

OUTSTANDING ACTIONS STATUS AS AT 9th DECEMBER 2015						
Action FC/XX/15	ACTION	Date	Action on	Target Completion	Current Status at 9th December 2015	
26	Review lead roles and identify replacements due to resignations	13-05-15	DM/BD	Informal Councillor meeting to be scheduled	COMPLETE - discussed at UPC Away Day 19th Nov	
41	Invite WC tree preservation officer to give presentation to Council meeting	10-06-15	BL	For October meeting	COMPLETE - Will be attending meeting on 9th December	
45	Clarify verge ownership and maintenance in Parish	10-06-15	BL	No target	IN PROGRESS, evidence being collected	
53	Obtain quotes for new path in Allotments from The Croft	08-07-15	DM	For October meeting	Outstanding	
66	Clarify position on connection of electricity supply to Duck House meter box	14-10-15	SH	Soonest	Complete	
67	Purchase replacement Gateway Sign	14-10-15	BL	Soonest	IN PROGRESS	
68	Purchase litter bin for Oakfrith Pathway and circulate list of all bins in the Parish and who is responsible for emptying - UPC or WC	14-10-15	BL	Soonest	IN PROGRESS	
69	Purchase signage	14-10-15	BL	Soonest	IN PROGRESS	
70	Obtain definitive proposal from FOFF for remaining budget spend - mower option understood will not go ahead	14-10-15	BL	Soonest	See written report from CHB for December meeting	
77	Outline proposal for Welcome to Urchfont leaflet to be circulated to all councillors and to confirm Church 'welcome pack' does not lead to duplication	14-10-15	DM	Soonest	IN PROGRESS	
78	To develop 'Urchfont in 2016' film proposal and provide estimate of cost for December discussion on 2016/17 budget. AS warned at meeting on 11th November that this may not be accomplished for variety of reasons	14-10-15	AS	09-12-15	IN PROGRESS	
79	Obtain new quote(s) for cemetery wall repair	11-11-15	RT	Soonest	COMPLETE - quote & work	
80	Advise BL of budget proposals by 25th November 2015	11-11-15	ALL	25-11-15	Complete - proposals received	
81	Investigate possibility of Council obtaining loans	11-11-15	BL	09-12-15	Complete - possible but complex	
82	Seek estimate for additional bollards at crossing by Crooks Lane	11-11-15	GD	25-11-15	Quotes obtained	
83	Can dogs be banned from a PROW, seek clarification	11-11-15	PW	Soonest	Complete - No as PROW, but could be as PROW is considered a highway	
84	BD to draft letter to Barbara Burke setting out Council position on PROW	11-11-15	BD	Soonest	Complete - Draft circulated 13th November	
85	SH to circulate response from Karen Guest detailing conditions on Manor Farmyard planning approval	11-11-15	SH	Soonest	In Progress	
86	To prepare quote for refurbishment of Parish benches	11-11-15	LCP	25-11-15	COMPLETE - LCP quote received	
87	To remove broken bench below tree in centre of playing field	11-11-15	DM	Soonest	In Progress	
88	To provide recently published capacity forecasts for Urchfont School	11-11-15	PW	Soonest	COMPLETE - capacity figures received	
89	To canvas adjoining Parish Council's regarding Speed Indicator Devices on offer from WC	11-11-15	BL	Soonest	COMPLETE - Easterton & Market Lavington interested subject to cost	
90	Initiate electricity supply contract with OVO	09-12-15	RT	Soonest	NEW	
91	Negotiate possible price reduction with MDN for seat refurbishment	09-12-15	PB	Soonest	NEW	
92	Amend budget and demand Precept from WC by due date	09-12-15	BL	22-01-16	NEW	
93	Discuss Farmers Field with Charlotte Hill-Bladwin	09-12-15	BD	Soonest	NEW	
94	Inform WC of decision on Playing Field	09-12-15	BL	Soonest	Complete - email sent 10/12/15	
95	Draft disappointment letter to Redcliffe Homes re Plot 19	09-12-15	SH	Soonest	NEW	

96	Identify councillors responsible for sub-sets of top level roles	09-12-15	ALL	14-12-15	NEW	
97	To publish new lead councillor roles on notice boards and website	09-12-15	BL	Soonest	NEW	
98	Apply for Section 106 funding	09-12-15	BL	Soonest	NEW	
99	Extend validity of Playdale quote to end of March 2016	09-12-15	AS	Soonest	NEW	
<b>KEY</b>						
	= New action at last meeting, no update information available to date					
	= No indication of action having been taken - Outstanding					
	= Action in progress					
	= Complete					

## **LEAD COUNCILLOR, WORKING GROUP AND CLERK REPORTS – DECEMBER 2015**

**A. Web Site** – The Parish Council and Community web site appears to be well used and contains a lot of useful information on and about the Community. Whilst Bob and I try to keep it as up to date as possible by regular review and updating, we nevertheless still need organisations and individuals in the Community to tell us about changes required to their pages or provide additional information for publication. The .gov.uk domain licence has been renewed for a period of 6 years to 8<sup>th</sup> November 2021 covering both website and email.

### **Dave Mottram**

**B. Liaison with Army Ranges** – No specific contacts have been made with the Army recently, but details of exercises / activities are published on the Parish Council and Community website under News, Notice Board and Events – MOD Salisbury Plain Newsletter.

### **Royston Thomas**

**C. Farmers Field** When I last met with Phil & team we discussed actions for the autumn winter period including:-

- Hand Pulling weed killer affected scrape debris and piling under trees to south of area.
- It was a good 65% success rate kill of iris and sedge on the south east end of the scrape, there is no sign of any further sedge growth and therefore no need for second chemical application.
- Maintaining clear running waterways to and from the area.
- Horizontal Base Prune wild rose growth to regenerate in February and strim down surrounding Rose Bay Willow Herb.
- Maintain Silviculture exercises.
- Hedges by Term Contractor due for cutting in February inside and outside area.

The team have worked effectively over the summer and autumn maintaining pathways and keeping the reserve looking very fine and accessible. This is a great achievement as it takes skill and care to make nature reserves look natural without being inaccessible. This should be noted and the team very much thanked for their efforts.

With now just four FOFF volunteers, when we last met we talked about possibly pooling resources with other groups in the parish to spread the work load somewhat as attempts to recruit have not been great. We lost one new volunteer due to the use of chemicals in a nature area and Richard moving away is another blow to our numbers. Phil Milanes is going to contact Friends of Oakfrith and the rights of way group to discuss any opportunities.

The FOFF group wish to understand the cost charged by the term contractor for mowing in Farmers Field during the growing season.

There is a thought that if resources were pooled, an investment into a walk behind mower that can cope with ROW and FF and the Oakfrith brush/nettle/rough mowing would be a better long term investment perhaps with support from UPC and Scarecrow grants as it would benefit the whole parish. This needs further discussion and a budget!

As mentioned before, the FF team do need a good sized double wheeled barrow (Mole Valley have these <http://www.molevalleyfarmers.com/mvf/store/products/jfc-jumbo-tipping-wheelbarrow-blue>) and waders though to continue the work, can £450 be put into a budget for that next year, or as I recall there is spare budget (no 2<sup>nd</sup> spray) that could be used before April!?

### **With many thanks to Charlotte Hill-Baldwin for providing this report**

**D. Cemetery** – The cemetery continues to operate in accord with regulations and is maintained on a regular and satisfactory basis by the Parish Council contractor. The new parking / turning area appears to be working well for undertakers and the public and I have not received any recent reports that vehicles have ignored the bollards protecting the cremation plot area. Agreed repairs to the Bier House are in progress, I have not been advised when they will be completed.

## **Bob Lunn**

**E. Clerks Report** – apart from key correspondence, nothing to report that is not being updated and/or discussed in other agenda items or reports.

### **Key Correspondence and E-mails – including:**

- Various correspondence regarding Public Right of Way (PROW) including:
  - agreement of draft Council position statement to WC
  - Request from School Governors for analysis of 2012 questionnaires on playground and community access questionnaires
- Latest response from WC three options for playing field CAT
- Website and email Domain (.gov.uk) renewed until 2021
- Further Town & Parish Precept 2016/17 information
- Crookwood Lane Lay-By proposal
- Various playground equipment offers and advertising
- Village Household burglaries
- Request to make presentation on Peppercombe proposals and subsequent interaction on process
- Investigating SID (Speed Indicator Device) co-operation with adjacent Parishes
- Complaints re state of footpaths and litter bins
- Welcome letter to Manor Farmyard residents
- WC Christmas / New Year Waste Collection information
- Various allotment issues
- Advice to other Villages on Neighbourhood Plan preparation

## **Bob Lunn**

**G. Community Access and Travel Plan Working Group** – Following the helpful response from Wiltshire Highways regarding the Crookwood Lane Layby I propose to request UPC take this up as a Project for the next financial year, thereby removing it from the Working Party. It will be on the Agenda for the meeting on 9th December.

A letter has been sent to Ruth Durrant, School Travel Plan Advisor, asking what happens next regarding the Capital Grant Application for improvements at Top Green.

A meeting will be arranged when we have further feedback.

## **Nicky Mitchell**

**H. Section 106 Working Group** – Nothing to report, but presentation to be given at Item 13 on the agenda

## **Andy Stevens**