



## **DRAFT Minutes of the Urchfont Parish Council (UPC) Meeting held on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> April 2016 in the Main Hall of Urchfont Village Hall**

**Present: Councillors:** Mottram (DM – Chairman), Donald (BD), Mitchell (NM), Thomas (RT), Day (GD), Hill (TH), Gibb (HG), Holt (SH), Stephens (AS) and Chapman (JC – from item 7)

**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, John Chapman, Emma Chapman, Stephen Wells, Paul Melhuish, Linda Jennings, Malcolm Taylor, Rodney Gillingham, Kevin MacEvoy, Marjorie Cox

- 1. Welcome** – The Chairman welcomed councillors and members of the public.
- 2. Apologies:** Cllr Paul Baker (PB)
- 3. Declarations of Interest:** None declared at meeting
- 4. Minutes** of the Meeting of the Council held on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2016.

It was noted that Mr Richard Hawkins had been incorrectly shown as attending this meeting.

<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Proposer</b>	<b>Seconder</b>	<b>Decision</b>
To accept and sign the minutes as a true record of the meeting	TH	NM	Unanimously agreed

### **5. Action List Status Review and Update Reports from the Minutes of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2016** – DM reviewed the 'RED' and new actions from the last meeting actions as follows:

**FC/53/15 – DM** - ongoing, still awaiting approval from Aster

**FC/67/15 – BL** - Replacement Village Gateway currently unavailable, budget carried forward to 2016/17

**FC/91/15 – PB** - Action not completed and overtaken by events, refurbishment of seat authorised in the absence of any information on promised price discounts.

**FC/20/16 – GD** – reported that it is not at present possible to judge the effect of the new 40mph zone on the 30mph zone, but action is in hand to install metrocam measuring devices to gain meaningful data.

**6. Co-option of New Councillor** – BL reported that two candidates, John Chapman and Stephen Wells, had expressed interest in the vacant post; their eligibility had been confirmed and details had been circulated to all councillors prior to the meeting. Recognising that they had already submitted written statements on why they should be considered, DM invited the candidates to make any additional comments. John Chapman reiterated the fact that he had only been resident in the Parish for six months, but felt that his skills and experience complimented those which already exist on the Council. Stephen Wells reiterated the fact that he has previous experience as a councillor, has lived in the Parish for two years although has a relatively local background and has engaged in community activities. Overseen by BL, a paper vote of all councillors present was then conducted. This resulted in John Chapman (JC) achieving the absolute majority decision required to be offered the post. This he accepted, signed his acceptance of office paperwork and was invited to join the Council for the rest of

the evening. JC was also given Registration of Interests forms and the Code of Conduct which require completion and return to BL.

DM thanked Stephen Wells for his interest and encouraged him to apply for any subsequent vacancies and for the general election to be held in May 2017 when the whole Council will be subject to the re-election process. DM said that it is a pity that UPC could not co-opt two new councillors today, but this was not possible due to WC Electoral Services approval of only one vacancy and the fact that the overall number of councillors on the Council are dictated by legislation.

**ACTION: FC/22/16 - JC**

**7. Financial Statement and Bank Reconciliation as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016** – BL confirmed that the statement indicates that the Council has a reserve at the end of the financial year of £13,082 including £450 carry forward of the budget for the replacement gateway which is currently not available, net reserve = £12,632. This reserve had increased from that forecast at the end of February due to significant cemetery receipts and a reduction in forecast expenditure on some account lines. Funds in the bank at 31<sup>st</sup> March amounted to £15,202.28 less unrepresented cheques of £1435.06 = £13,767.22 made up of £12,632.96 UPC Reserve + £450 Gateway C/F + £684.26 Allotment Association Funds. All accounts are subject to internal and external audit, paperwork for each is currently being prepared.

Considerable difficulties have been experienced with Lloyds Business Banking since February due primarily to their arbitrary and without notice withdrawal of the long standing 'sweep' facility to transfer funds automatically between Council accounts, this resulted in cheques being bounced when sufficient funds were available in Council accounts. This was exacerbated by lack of, or poor response to enquiries that have to be made to a call centre and the fact that submitted mandate variations were rejected on a technicality and had to be resubmitted because the Bank had not taken note of earlier written communications from the Council. The issues have now been resolved; BL now has sole access to on-line banking to facilitate better oversight and transfer of funds between accounts and to make on-line payments which many businesses and individuals now prefer. Internal Council governance still requires two councillor signatories to authorise all payments by cheque or on-line, proposed amendment to Financial Procedures to reflect these changes will be submitted to the May meeting for approval. DM, who had been kept aware of the evolving situation throughout, thanked BL for all his hard work and tenacity to resolve this situation and protect the interests of the Council.

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

- i. **Neighbourhood Plan** – Steering Group comments sent to WC with examination version of the Plan – see also additional comments in item 10i below.
- ii. **Clerks Report** – BL updated his report noting that the final Transfer Deed for the Duck House had been received which incorporates all the changes proposed by him and the Council solicitor. The Deed had been signed by BL and DM before the meeting and this would be returned to the solicitors for legal finalisation (Returned by hand 14<sup>th</sup> April 2016). When complete this will facilitate installation of the electrical distribution pillar and start of the new electricity supply contract. BL also reported that he had received the proposed MOD lease for the Urchfont Picnic site, this has been forwarded to the Council solicitor for review and comment. The current lease has already lapsed with WC, but MOD is aware that UPC are willing to take it on.

**9. Update on negotiations / issues with WC:**

- i. **PROW to Playing Field** – BD reported that the planned meeting of the working group this week had been postponed by WC without a new date being set.
- ii. **Playing Field CAT (Western End)** – See Clerk's Report (attached on website only)

- iii. **Playing Field Proposal (Eastern End)** – See Clerk’s Report (attached on website only)
- iv. **Urchfont Picnic Site** – See Clerk’s Report (attached on website only) and item 6ii above.

## 10. Neighbourhood Plan

- i. **An update on site brief issues** – As a result of Council debate on the Beeches planning application, the Steering Group had received a number of complaints about apparent changes in the site briefs. BD had responded on behalf of the Group, an example of which is attached under Written Reports a ii (on website only) which was also copied to all Steering Group members and councillors. All were reminded that the Council did not support the Beeches application. He also commented on the fact that the Plan change control procedure had been changed as a result of public dislike, in his view the replacement is not as good.

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

Mr Richard Hawkins praised the Steering Group for the Plan which is the result of a fantastic amount of work, but he still has reservations about Section 2. He believes that anyone who reads the appendix will expect to see a predominance of 2/3 bedroom properties suitable for lower incomes, he does not believe this to be the case. In reality he believes that only 8 houses will prove to be in this category. He was adamant that the vote taken during public consultation related to sites only, not a vote on house types or sizes against each site. He had pointed out this shortcoming to the Group at the time by email. Moreover the vote was by email rather than during a public consultation meeting. He was astonished that the Parish Council then endorsed the Plan by e-vote prior to submission to WC, thus denying the public the opportunity to express their views at a Council meeting.

### The Chairman re-opened the Council meeting

TH thanked the Steering Group for the enormous amount of work that they had put into producing the Plan, but is saddened that the issues surrounding the site briefs has blighted and undermined that work. He has, therefore, some sympathy with some of comments being made by Mr Hawkins and others. He also recognised that there have been some divisions within the Steering Group itself in trying to reach the finished Plan and was particularly annoyed that the importance of the site briefs had not been highlighted to the Council prior to WC submission approval. It may be considered desirable by some to have more public consultation and to change the appendices to resolve the issues, but this would mean withdrawal of the current Plan and re-submitting the whole plan with the associated delays and unforeseen consequences that this may bring to the Parish. He urged councillors and the public to support and approve the final Plan warts and all, following any changes recommended by the Examiner, to ensure that the Parish is protected from unwanted development.

SH expressed disappointment that the start of the review of the Plan by the examiner had been delayed to 23<sup>rd</sup> May due to delays in contract placement by WC. In response to Mr Hawkins comment about the vote by email, this had been hastily arranged because people did not want to vote openly at the public meeting(s). It is important to remember that the Plan is a live document which will change over time through circumstances, it is most important that the current version is the subject of a ‘YES’ vote and decision at the referendum. If not then developers will take advantage of the lack of a Plan and make widespread applications for development in the Parish, we are already aware of one which proposes around 35 affordable

homes south of the B3098 opposite Ballingers. DM concluded the debate by saying that the Plan had been submitted to WC and that we should now await the examiner's report and recommendations before further debate. He also reiterated the fundamental need to promote and encourage all electors to vote in favour of the Neighbourhood Plan at the referendum, a 'No' decision would potentially be a disaster for the Parish.

- ii. **To consider and approve ongoing responsibilities of NP Steering Group** – BD expressed the view that the Steering Group should be disbanded after receipt and action of the examiners comments or after the referendum. TH, supported by AS, disagreed on the basis that the Council had endorsed the Plan before submission to WC, should take ownership and disband the Steering Group with immediate effect. SH countered that the Steering Group should deal with any changes proposed by the examiner on the basis that they had all the experience of the Plan to date. TH queried who had chaired the Steering Group and the apparent lack of notes of Group meetings which he felt were an important requirement for such a detailed and complex activity. SH countered on the basis that minutes have been kept of all meetings and the fact that the modus operandi of the Group did not require a chairman to be elected. DM suggested that maybe BL should be invited to take minutes at future meetings of the Steering Group. On the basis that there are clear disagreements on the way forward, it was agreed that the full NP Steering Group should be consulted on the issue and their views reported back at the May meeting for a final decision on the way forward to be taken by Council.

**ACTION: FC/23/16 - SH**

11. **UPC 10 Year Strategy and Plan** – The strategy was presented to the Council at the February meeting. GD emphasised the objective of setting a long term strategy for the Council, focussing on a small number of defined key activities but encompassing wider aims to benefit the Community in the long term. DM believed that the strategy should encompass in some way the wishes of the Community identified as part of the neighbourhood plan consultation process, this would reinforce and focus the strategies to be taken forward by the Council over the ten years. SH welcomed the Strategy and Plan as being proactive rather than reactive. It was agreed that GD should further consider how the strategy and neighbourhood plans can be integrated and to propose refinements to the 10 Year Plan objectives for presentation to the Council post the neighbourhood plan referendum.

**ACTION: FC/24/16 - GD**

12. **Future Plan for Farmers Field** – TH highlighted the key points and suggested way forward in his paper which had been circulated to all councillors. Funding for suggested improvements does not necessarily have to come from UPC, other organisations may be willing to provide grants. Whatever is agreed in terms of improvement and utilisation, better promotion of increased lawful and recreational use of the site is paramount. DM expressed the view that the site does not currently achieve the desired aims expressed by Ernest Pottinger, we need to try and meet those aims in the future. BD suggested that access for dogs needs to be addressed as a way to improve utilisation of the Field, currently they are barred. It was agreed that TH and BD should develop a more detailed plan in consultation with Philip Milanes and report back to the Council at their June 2016 meeting. JC pointed out that his wife is a senior member of Wiltshire Wildlife Trust who may be prepared to assist in developing this facility.

**ACTION: FC/25/16 – TH/BD**

13. **School Travel Plan / Top Green Grant Application** – NM reported that an application had been submitted to WC to clarify whether any form of planning application or approval is required for the

works to be undertaken on Top Green. Obtaining the grant for these works is dependent on this clarification and any necessary approvals that need to be gained.

**14. Future of Urchfont Scouts** – DM reported on the fact that Peter Wheatley is retiring as the Scout Leader in the summer after some 16 years in that role, unless a replacement can be found then the likelihood is that the only remaining youth group within the Parish will have to close. This would be a great pity and so every effort should be made to try and identify a new leader, councillors were asked to identify and encourage likely candidates for the role to put their name forward. BL was asked to emphasise Council support in the next edition of Redhorn News.

**ACTION: FC/26/16 – ALL**

**ACTION: FC/27/16 - BL**

**15. Manor Farmyard** – SH reported that Jeremy Brown building Plot 19 had generously facilitated sprinklers to re-generate drying out turf in the development. He has sought advice from SH on several occasions about his desired changes to the build, but has been told that any changes would require planning consent. He is hoping to complete Plot 19 by September/October. GD asked about the use of rounded corner bricks from the demolished building on this plot, SH advised that the planning consent required the use of these bricks but did not specify where they should be used. TH asked about ownership of Pond Wall, DM reported that John Snook had confirmed that this was part of the sale to Redcliffe Homes. BL had subsequently written to Redcliffe to seek their view on ongoing responsibility for the wall but is still awaiting a response, BL was asked to hasten the response. Declaring an interest as a resident of Manor Farmyard; JC stated that individual plot sale transfer documents do not seem to include reference to the pond wall, suggesting that ownership of the wall may not yet have been effectively transferred to the Management Company as the developer apparently intended. JC believes that residents at Manor Farmyard do not become members of the Management Company until the last unit has been sold, one of them will be appointed Director of MFMC. Maybe Redcliffe will retain ownership of the wall.

**ACTION: FC/28/16 – BL**

DM thanked Emma Chapman for her work to identify the culprit and organise re-instatement of the bund at the entrance to Manor Farmyard following damage caused by a scaffolding lorry.

**16. Parish Meeting Preparation** – DM advised that the agenda had been agreed for the meeting which would start at 7pm in the Village Hall, BL had put up posters around the Parish and publicised the event in Redhorn News and the Parish website. All members of the Community are invited and encouraged to attend this meeting. BL will prepare agendas, provide finance information and councillor name badges, SJ will gather written questions from attendees on the night which will be addressed in the Q&A session. BL reminded all that there is a need for them to attend and set up the Hall from around 6pm, he is not able to attend this meeting or to co-ordinate the set up arrangements on the night. DM will prepare the Council report presentation / facilitate drinks and SJ prepare 'nibbles'. DM confirmed that any presentation material should be sent to him in advance of the meeting for inclusion on his laptop.

**ACTION: FC/29/16 – ALL**

**17. Preparation for UPC AGM in May** – BL advised on the statutory requirements for the AGM on the 11<sup>th</sup> May which requires councillors to make proposals and be prepared to stand for various roles on

the Council (Chairman, Vice Chairman, Representatives on external bodies, Internal Auditor) and to approve subscriptions and meeting dates.

**ACTION: FC/30/16 - ALL**

**18. Update on Current Parish Issues** – None that have not been covered in other agenda items.

**19. External Meetings** – DM belatedly reported and updated on a meeting of the Village Hall Committee meeting held in January. As of today the Hall enjoys CIO status which facilitates the move to a new constitution and requires applicants to fill the roles of Chairman, Estates manager, Facilities Manager and Hall Manager (probably a paid role). DM is standing down as Chairman and John Watson is standing down as the Hall Manager.

**20. Councillors' Reports and Items for Future Agenda** - None

**Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2016 (AGM) in Urchfont Village Hall Conference Room commencing at 7.00pm**

**Meeting Closed at 9:25pm**

Draft minutes prepared by BL, Clerk to the Council 14<sup>th</sup> April 2016

## **SUBMITTED UPC WRITTEN REPORTS – APRIL 2016**

### **a. Urchfont, Wedhampton and Lydeaway Neighbourhood Plan Consultation.**

#### **i. Comments from the steering group to accompany the examination version**

Following the Regulation 14 Consultation the plan was updated to address most of the comments made by members of the Parish. These updates were circulated to, and approved by the Steering Group as set out in the Statement of Public Consultation. Since this was done, two planning applications have been received and considered by Urchfont Parish Council.

At the Parish Council Planning meeting it became apparent that two UWLNP related issues needed to be addressed by the Steering Group as part of the Regulation Consultation. The Steering Group met on 22nd March to discuss these and they agreed the following comments for the examiner to consider while examining the Plan:

- 1) The site evaluation process involved a 2 phase site scoring process, and 3 presentations to members of the public to determine the most appropriate sites to be developed to meet the requirement to build approximately 37 new properties in the Parish during the lifetime of the plan. The site briefs (Appendix A) were intended to reflect the information used both to score the sites, and to be aligned to the content of the presentations. The version of Appendix A distributed for the Regulation 14 consultation was at variance with the site scoring and presentation details. This was revised as part of the update process with agreement from the steering group, before the plan was submitted to Wiltshire Council for the Regulation 16 Consultation. The decision to use the version submitted as part of the Regulation 16 submission was upheld by a majority of 6 – 2 at the Steering Group meeting on 22nd March.
- 2) It is stated in the plan that the requirement is for a predominance of 2 – 3 bedroom homes. This has been interpreted in 2 different ways. One interpretation is that each site should achieve this balance; the other is that this is an overall target. The view of the majority of the Steering Group is that this should be seen as an overall target. Currently the figures in Appendix A show that a target of almost 60% of new homes being 2 -3 bedroom can be achieved depending on the mix at the Wildman's Garage site, which is currently an unknown quantity.

We have found that some Appendices are incorrectly numbered and would be grateful if you would consider the following changes:

- 1 The last line of Policy BE1 (page 32) refers to the Design Statement being Appendix S when it should be Appendix T.
- 2 The last line of page 44 refers to Appendix T when it should be Appendix U.

The steering group would be happy to discuss these issues, and any others that arise during the examination process, with the examiner.

Date 28/03/2016

Inclusion of above on NWLNP requested by Bill Donald.

## ii. Letter sent to Mr Arnott

Sent by E-mail: Tuesday, March 29, 2016 10:08 AM  
Copied to: NP Steering Group, UPC Councillors

Dear Mr Arnott,

I am replying to you on behalf of the Neighbourhood Steering Group, and this is our position.

Thank you for all your correspondence regarding both The Beeches development and the Neighbourhood Plan.

I'm sorry that you are unclear about the circumstances around which the contents of the site briefs have been altered and amended.

Let me try and make it clearer.

- A proposed list of 15 potential development sites were presented to over 200 residents, 190 of whom voted at 3 public meetings. Of these sites, 3 failed at the first stage assessment as they were deemed to be in green space so not voted upon.
- The NP steering group created a three stage site scorecard in order to rate each site.
- The NP steering group did their own score and combined this with the score from the public who were afforded 25% of the total score. The votes were made after the site briefs had been displayed and explained.
- The scorecard used the size of dwellings as one of the key measures – a full list of site attributes is on the web site.
- The list of sites was then ordered by score to give the 9 proposed sites in the plan to achieve the required 37 additional homes.

At this point we had a list of 9 proposed sites that had been voted upon along with proposed site briefs.

We then published the plan for the village to comment upon. Unfortunately when this version of the plan went to print, one member of the steering group unilaterally decided to make changes to the site briefs (Appendix A) without telling members of the steering group and without voted consent. This was only discovered and reported upon by one person during the public consultation period. The Steering group then met to debate and agree all changes that needed to be made following this consultation period. This included whether we should leave Appendix A as published in the village draft and be criticised for it not being representative of the public meetings or change it back to represent what 190 people voted upon? The Steering group unanimously agreed to make the changes and this was agreed a second time prior to submission to Wiltshire Council when sent out through e-mail correspondence.

The approved process for submission of the plan makes no provision for a further round of public consultation to approve these changes. However, the public can make representation to WC up to 30th March. The examiner will have sight of all these representations.

We now have the situation where you and some other members of the community are asking for Appendix A to be changed.

I personally believe that changing Appendix A back to its previous version would make little or no difference to what we actually build as the plan is a guide. After all, we have already used the plan to object to the proposed development on the Beeches site, helped by your submission and we have approved the development at Peppercombe, which had it been made up of 2/3 bedroom houses would almost certainly have been rejected by WC on grounds of traffic. The other differences in Appendix A are of little material consequence.

Before any development takes place, planning applications will still need approval by Wiltshire Council when detailed issues are usually ironed out.

The Steering group met again last week and by a majority of 6-2 voted to take no further action regarding Appendix A other than to write to the examiner to inform her of the situation we are in. She may decide for us, but as we stand today we are in no position to make further changes to the plan. If and when the examiner suggests amendments these will be published by the Steering Group before being accepted or rejected.

I'm sorry that this doesn't meet your required outcome.

Yours sincerely

Bill Donald  
Vice Chairman Urchfont Parish Council

**b. Clerks Report**

- i. Playing Field CAT (Western End)** – as of 7<sup>th</sup> April, the UPC solicitor had still not received any draft transfer documentation from the WC solicitor, although he received an apology for the delay due to priority works.
- ii. Playing Field Proposal (Eastern End)** – In line with the UPC request, WC are proposing to make application to the Secretary of State to CAT the eastern end of the playing field to UPC (excluding the School required play area outlined in red on earlier plans). I have been sent a copy of the application form and have been asked for UPC assistance with completing sections on 'community use' and 'consultation'. This is being progressed.
- iii. Councillor Vacancy** – I have received two expressions of interest for the current councillor vacancy, Stephen Wells and John Chapman. Both have completed an application form, have confirmed their eligibility and provided personal statements against the criteria listed in the UPC Co-option Procedure. This information will be circulated to all councillors prior to the meeting to facilitate co-option of one of the candidates at the meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> April.
- iv. Transfer of Duck House to UPC** – Following the on-site meeting between the UPC solicitor and myself on 11<sup>th</sup> March to discuss the proposed Transfer Agreement, changes to that Agreement have now been agreed by the Redcliffe Homes solicitor. The document has been returned to Redcliffe to amend one text error, but it is hoped that it will be returned for signature by the Chairman and myself week commencing 11<sup>th</sup> April. Completion of the Transfer will then facilitate works to install the electrical distribution panel and new electricity supply contract.
- v. Lease for Urchfont Picnic Site** – WC have been notified of UPC interest in taking over the lease for this site which has apparently already lapsed. WC are now initiating the transfer process with the MOD and a new lease will be sent to UPC for approval. Assuming that the contents are basically in line with those provided and discussed at the UPC March meeting, I will get the lease checked by the UPC solicitor before signature.
- vi. New UPC Signage** – New permanent signage has been purchased and erected in accord with the approved signage project for the Pathway to Oakfrith Wood, Allotments, Recreation Ground and Cemetery.

- vii. Finance** – End of 2015/16 Financial Statement and bank reconciliation will be circulated when bank statements have been received. At this time the accounts indicate an end of year reserve of year reserve of £13,110 less £450 gateway project carried forward = £12,660; up on the previous forecast due mainly to increased cemetery receipts in the last month and lower spend on some account lines.
- viii. Urchfont Manor Permissive Path** – I have received notification from Eleanor Jones that the permissive path through the Manor Grounds to the cricket ground will be closed over the Scarecrow Festival weekend 30<sup>th</sup> April to 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2016 inclusive. This will be publicised on the Parish Website and in the May edition of Redhorn News.

**Bob Lunn**