

DRAFT Minutes of the Urchfont Parish Council (UPC) Full Council Meeting held remotely on Wednesday 10th March 2021

Present: Councillors: Day (GD – Chairman), Botham (MB – Vice Chairman), Hill (TH), Kemp (MK), Cowen (LC), Creasey (GC), Hollyman (MH) and Stevens (DS)

Clerk to the Council: Lunn (BL)

Councilor for Urchfont & The Cannings: Whitehead (PW)

Members of the Public (for all or part of the remote meeting): Mr. S Veitch, Mr. B Naylor, Mr. D Kinnaird

A. INTRODUCTION

1. Welcome by the Chairman – GD welcomed all to what would be the 12th remote meeting using Zoom.

2. Apologies: Cllrs Cottle (SC) and Rotherham (PR)

3. Update on Devizes Gateway with Tamara Reay and Catharine Symington. GD welcomed Tamara and Catharine to the meeting and invited them to give an update on progress since their last presentation given at the December 2020 meeting. Tamara and Catharine talked through a slide show on the development, progress and future actions on this proposal which will hopefully end up with Devizes Parkway being implemented in 2025. A link to the presentation slides used can be found under the draft minutes on the website.

GD asked whether they had been happy with the 2539 consultation responses received, Catharine responded yes on the basis that this represented around 7.5% of the targeted audience. PW commented that this response level compares very favourably with responses to the Wiltshire Local Plan consultation which targeted the whole of Wiltshire with a lot of publicity, in his experience response levels of less than 1% are more the norm even for controversial topics.

GD noted that one consultation response suggested that too much emphasis is being placed on travelling east, Catharine responded by saying that emphasis for the project is connectivity and not on commuting.

GD thanked Tamara and Catharine for their informative presentation and comments.

B. PLANNING – See separate minutes.

C. FULL COUNCIL MEETING

1. Declarations of Interest – None made at the meeting

2. Remote Public Participation / Email input from members of the public and External Reports – No members of the public in attendance wished to speak, BL confirmed that one email had been received from a member of the public – see Item 6a below.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 10th February 2021

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	
To approve and sign the minutes unchanged as a true and accurate record of the meeting.	GD	LC	AGREED unanimously

4. Action List Status Review and Update Reports from the Minutes of the meeting held on 10th February 2021. BL reported that all outstanding actions appear to be ongoing and/or will be updated during subsequent items below. GD confirmed that he is trying to meet up with Bill Donald to discuss the Wedhampton to Urchfont footpath situation.

5. Finance

a. Financial Summary and Bank Reconciliation as at 28th February 2021 – The reports had been distributed to all councillors prior to the meeting. BL referred to comments in his Clerk’s report which indicate that the accounts are in good order and that details represent the basis for the proposed 21/22 budget at Item 5a. No questions were asked or clarification sought by councillors.

b. Proposed Budget 21/22 – The proposed budget, updated since the last version presented at the December 2020 meeting and based on data available at 9th March 2021, had been distributed to all councillors prior to the meeting.

BL emphasised that likely funding readily available during 2021/22 (including PRECEPT, Reserve at 31st March 2021, Carry Forward funds and miscellaneous receipts less the target reserve at 31st March 2022) amounted to around £60,491 compared to a proposed overall budget (Fixed, Running, Projects and Financial Assistance) requirement of £64,432 – a deficit of £3,941. However, to offset the deficit, additional Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds of around £29,800 are available which could be used to fund appropriate projects such as highways issues.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	
To adopt the proposed budget as the basis for the 2021/22 accounts.	GD	MK	AGREED unanimously

GD thanked BL for preparation of this comprehensive budget.

6. Lead Councillor, Working Groups, Clerk & other Written Reports (See Appendix 1 - attached on website only)

a. Clerks Report – BL reported that he had received an email from Mr. D Myers regarding his update on Wedhampton – Perceived Speed Issues – (see email at Appendix 3 – attached on website only. The main points made are that:

- He is of the view that Metro Counter statistics have proved that the 20mph limit in Urchfont does not work and did not justify a Speed Watch site
- He considers that any spending on installing a 20mph limit in Wedhampton will be a gross waste of public money
- That poor driver behaviour is more likely to be the problem rather than speed and that some drivers will ignore whatever limit is set.

PW commented that he believed that the 20mph zone in Urchfont does work for the majority of drivers.

As stated in the written report, BL confirmed that metro-counters have been requested from WC to establish whether there really is a speed issue, the results will inform forward thinking on measures to be introduced.

b. Councillor Reports

i. UPC Highways (including letter received regarding potholes) – MH reported that the expected hot fill of potholes around Franklins Farm had not taken place, having contacted the WC Highways Engineer this activity has now been re-scheduled to 22nd March along with rectification of worsening potholes on the road leading up to Redhorn Hill. MH also reported that he had sent a photo of the demolished road sign at the junction of Greengate Road and the High Street in Wedhampton to WC Highways Engineer, a new sign is required.

PW confirmed that resolution of the persistent significant flooding at Ballingers on the B3098 is now classed as one of the top five work priorities for WC Highways. The problem arises not only because of storm drain issues but also because of significant run off of rain water from the adjacent fields.

MH stated that a further zoom meeting with the WC Highways Engineer is scheduled for early April when the list of issues submitted will be further reviewed.

ii. **UPEG** – the report did not require an update.

7. B3098 Speed Zones – PW referred to his email dated 9th March 2021 to all councillors setting out the options to be considered (Email at Appendix 2 - attached on the website only).

PW confirmed that if approved by UPC he will initiate action to provide the 40mph buffer zone to the east of Urchfont, as previously implemented to the west, the justification to be prepared by WC but maybe with assistance from UPC. Such action will give an opportunity to reconsider re-siting of the 30mph signs further east in years to come once traffic has become used to the 40mph buffer zone. GD commented that the 40mph zone to the west has certainly improved the situation coming from Eastcott, and a similar zone to the east would contribute to a long term ambition of UPC for which a strategy was devised some years ago and against which money has been spent in the interim. LC believed the proposed buffer zone to be a very effective and worthwhile compromise, TH agreed that this is a good plan to pursue. GD thanked PW for submitting the options list in advance of the meeting and requested urgent implementation.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconded	
To authorise PW to request Wiltshire Council to install a 40mph buffer zone on the B3098 to the east of Urchfont on a permanent TRO basis.	GD	DS	AGREED unanimously

ACTION: FC/13/21 – PW

8. Approved Tree Works – GC reported that Will Corke (Green Farm Ltd) had been instructed to carry out the required outstanding tree works as agreed at the February meeting. SC had sent a justification statement to BL regarding the limited quotation process used, this had been accepted by BL. Will Corke has confirmed that he will undertake the works in mid-May.

The second element of the action following the 2020 Survey was to mark all ash trees on Parish owned / managed land and then set up a monitoring process to identify progress of ash die back which will require additional works. GC had originally offered to mark the trees with a cross using a chain saw, but insurance concerns were expressed at that time. DS suggested that the trees could be marked with aluminium tags without causing any harm to trees, a method commonly adopted within tree management circles. It was agreed that GC / SC should pursue such a marking scheme. In terms of monitoring the marked trees, further work is needed to identify and set in place a robust reporting methodology which might involve the public or the UPC maintenance contractor for example.

ACTION: FC/14/21 – GC / SC

9. Parish Council Elections May 2021 – GD confirmed that Parish Council elections are due to be held on 6th May 2021. BL confirmed that all 11 UPC seats will be included in this election process, the existing councillors stand down on 10th May 2021 and the newly elected / re-elected councillors take on their role from the same date. BL has distributed a lot of information about the election to all councillors and posted notices on the Parish notice boards encouraging electors of the Parish to seek nomination, this will be replicated on the UPC website in due course. Full details of eligibility, timetable and the nomination process can be found on the WC website at www.wiltshire.gov.uk/elections. GD emphasised that there is a need for new candidates to take part in this election to ensure a full council membership is elected by the community.

10. COVID-19 Restrictions – local reports – TH reported that he is still collecting and delivering prescriptions to individuals and the Community Shop at the request of Day Lewis Pharmacy.

11. Census Day 21st March 2021 – A number of the councillors and the Clerk reported that they had already received their household invitation to take part through the post, MH believed that UPC do not need to take any further part locally as all manner of leaflets and facilities to gain assistance in completing the census have been set up by the ONS (Office for National Statistics) and is being publicised by WC. LC asked what action needs to be taken if your household does not receive a pack, PW responded that comprehensive guidance is available at www.census.gov.uk.

12. Telephone Kiosk – MK stated that it is planned to hold an event at the Telephone Box to celebrate spring, our emergence from lockdown and to get people thinking about the Best Kept Village (BKV) competition. It is hoped to encourage parishioners to get involved by decorating their front doors, gates or fences with a little something to brighten up the village. Either something floral or perhaps a little something made out of cleaning materials. With Urchfont looking a little tired, the aim is to provide a little fun and encourage folk to think about tidying our village in time for participation in the BKV competition.

The telephone box team will put an example display in the telephone box and will do their own displays at their own properties as an example of what people might want to do. Then others can follow suit if they so wish. The Camera Club has kindly agreed to take photographs of as many exhibits as they can find. At a later date, we will display these in the telephone box with a little voting system to select a favourite. Brian Taylor has kindly agreed to try to put the results in the Redhorn News.

The Telephone Box team have produced a small flyer for delivery to all households explaining the idea, give some examples of what people might like to do and encourage people to think about the BKV competition and how they might contribute. In this respect MK requested approval of a budget of £25 to cover the cost of the flyers. TH commented that he fully supported the initiative and would be prepared to help delivery of flyers to households.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	
To approve a budget of £25 to cover the cost of Telephone Kiosk flyers.	GD	TH	AGREED unanimously

13. CPRE Best Kept Village Competition 2021 – BL confirmed that whilst he had received application forms for the general BKV competition, he had not yet received details for the Laurence Kitching Winners of Winners competition in which Urchfont can participate having been a winner in 2019. When received, BL will help submit an application assuming that the decision to participate made at the February meeting stands. GD confirmed that the February decision stands.

ACTION: FC/15/21 - BL

MK expressed enthusiasm for Urchfont to take part, but voiced concern that the Village is looking somewhat tired and needs work to enhance chances of success. As such there is a need to publicise the event and encourage the community to improve elements on an individual if not group basis because of the COVID restrictions.

14. Update on Current Parish Issues not covered by above agenda items – GD asked for an update on the fly tipping issue in Stonepit Lay-By. MK stated that this appears to be a regular occurrence, suspected to be by the same person or persons unknown. LC commented that the bins are often full and so what is wrong with placing a sack alongside the bin, surely this is not fly-tipping. He added that it might be better to remove the bin(s). MK stated that the UPC maintenance contractor promptly clears full bins if he is notified as per the notice on the bin. PW echoed that bins are emptied promptly and also emphasised that placing sacks alongside the bin(s) is illegal, they should be placed in household wheelie bins for home collection. PW also confirmed that the practice is most definitely fly-tipping and an offender will be prosecuted by WC if identified. MK

confirmed that she had reported the latest incident on the My Wiltshire App, BL confirmed that the UPC maintenance contractor had been instructed not to remove black sacks dumped alongside litter bins.

15. External Meetings – GD reported that he had attended an on line webinar on the May Elections.

16. Councillors' Other Reports – None were submitted.

17. Items for Future Agenda

- a. Pathway to Oakfrith Wood (To be addressed when physical meetings in Village Hall are restarted with public attendance)

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.55pm.

Date of Next Scheduled Meeting: 14th April 2021

APPENDIX 1 TO UPC MINUTES OF THE MARCH 2021 FULL COUNCIL MEETING

a. CLERK'S REPORT

i. Update on Clerk's actions from February 2021 Meeting –

FC/09/21 – Submit 20mph speed zone proposal for Wedhampton – see item 3 below.

FC/11/21 – Purchase litter bin for Wedhampton – in progress

Planning/03 – Publish Latest News Article on website seeking comments on proposed answers on Wiltshire Local Plan consultation process – Published on 12th February 2021 with a deadline of 28th February for comments.

ii. Finance – The Financial Summary and Bank Reconciliation as at 28th February 2021 have been distributed to all councillors. This information demonstrates that the accounts are in good order. The predicted Reserve at 31st March 2021 at £15,966 is higher than the target primarily because of:

- the unexpected Small Business Grant received from WC;
- current predicted spend by the end of the financial year, but some project budgets may actually be carried forward unspent at the end of the year

We are now less than a month before the end of the financial year, can you please review any budgets applicable to you where funds remain available / unspent, make any approved purchases and ensure that VAT invoices that you have or receive are sent to me in good time for payment prior to the 31st March 2021.

iii. Wedhampton – Perceived Traffic Speed Issues – my enquiries have established that an assessment for a new 20mph limit through Wedhampton, which will check the current speed of vehicles and decide whether the road is suitable, costs a flat rate of £2,500. If the road is considered suitable, then the Traffic Regulation Order will need to be changed to show this and advertised at a further cost £3,000. Work on the ground to change the signage etc. will be then be required at additional cost. The process can go through CATG, in which case Urchfont PC will be expected to contribute at least 25% of these costs.

However, before even initiating a 20pph review I have been advised that the first action should be to establish what the actual position is in terms of speed of traffic through Wedhampton by free of charge use of metro counters. I have requested that these be put in place at the earliest opportunity, but have been advised by WC Traffic Surveys that use of such mechanisms is currently on hold due to the coronavirus situation.

iv. Best Kept Village Competition 2021 – Whilst I have received information and application forms for the main competition, I have not yet received the invitation and application to enter the **Laurence Kitching Winner of Winners Competition** open to County winners in the previous two years. They were:

2018 Large – Hullavington

Medium – Biddestone

Small – Charlton

2019 Large – Bratton

Medium – Urchfont

Small – Ansty

The invitation is expected shortly.

Bob Lunn, Clerk to the Council

b. COUNCILLOR REPORTS

i. UPC HIGHWAYS REPORT March 2021 - The Friar's Lane Grit Bins need refilling, the lower one being completely empty and damaged. This was recently reported to WC Highways and we are still awaiting action.

The Green Gates Road sign on the sharp bend in Wedhampton has been destroyed beyond repair by a vehicle and needs replacing. This has been reported to WC Highways.

The road outside Franklin's Farm is in a terrible and dangerous condition. WC scheduled this to be hot filled from this point along Uphill towards the village on 29th January, where the road has been steadily deteriorating with cracks, potholes and general delamination. At the time of writing this has still not been done. WC Highways have been chased on this.

The road to Redhorn Hill is also in a terrible and dangerous condition, with numerous deep potholes reappearing. Despite reporting this many times, WC have only seen fit to patch it occasionally, when it clearly requires resurfacing. WC Highways have been chased on this likewise.

(See letter** below to the Chairman received from Ann Blunden regarding potholes)

We have prepared a map of all the line markings in Urchfont and sent it to WC Highways, in anticipation of their promise to re-paint all worn markings once the weather improves.

We plan to have a meeting a.s.a.p. with Richard Dobson and Malcolm Bevan to discuss how to address these outstanding issues and clear the apparent log jam.

Cllrs. Martyn Hollyman and Mark Botham

**Dear Graham

With still so many potholes around and WCC seemingly unable to fill them properly, is it time that we went back to the old ways, when a local farmer N? was paid to keep the roads in reasonable order. Holes the size that we see everywhere are so dangerous for cyclists and small children. In France, each parish pays from the local tax for a chap to take care of the necessary problems. We could all help to pay.

A thought, which probably is not possible but we live in hope.

Best Wishes

Ann Blunden

ii. UPEG report for March UPC meeting - A UPEG virtual meeting was held on 1st March. Present were Lisa Kinnaird, Katharine Wale, Lewis Cowen, Samantha Dixon, Richard Bromley, Graham Day.

Key points

- Richard Bromley is close to completing an assessment of UPC's carbon footprint. The preliminary estimate is 30 tonnes CO2 per annum, but this is heavily influenced by the Crookwood Lane lay-by project (significant and non-repeatable) and the precise treatment by Hills of the waste they remove from the village. Richard has also shared a link to a webinar presented to the Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management (Wales) on how to calculate CO2 emissions. The link is here: : [Reducing emissions in aviation: Is zero carbon aviation possible? | Webinar - YouTube](#);
- The team noted the UPC decision regarding group composting and concur that promotion of individual composting is the way ahead.
- Leaflets – Lisa will obtain quotes for printing 2 x 650 leaflets covering transportation and general environmental tips;
- UPEG Environmental Day – still set for 24th July. A sub-group of Peter, Lisa, Caroline, Katharine and Lewis will start to work on the details of the programme, including identification and booking of external speakers;
- Village shop – Richard has offered to undertake an energy audit. Mark will speak to Rodney Gillington to obtain an asset list of fridge/freezer equipment;
- Lisa reported that about 1 km of tree planting on farmers' land is scheduled for the next year. Additional to this will be planting along the path to Oakfrith Wood discussed at the last UPC meeting. Lisa will speak to Graham Creasey regarding School involvement and Bob Lunn about obtaining landowner signature to a claim form. In addition, Romarna Corke has requested involvement by the Cubs/Beavers;

- Crisp packet recycling – Sam will investigate whether it is possible to obtain free membership of a scheme run by Terracycle, who specialise in “hard-to-recycle” materials. It also seems that there is a collection point run by Wadworth Brewery in Devizes for those who may want to take any material individually.

Cllr Graham Day

APPENDIX 2 TO UPC MINUTES OF THE MARCH 2021 FULL COUNCIL MEETING

Email from PW to the Clerk and all UPC Councillors on 9th March 2021

Bob, all

In reference to tomorrow's meeting I thought it might be helpful for me to email all with the potential options provided to me rather than just rely on me giving the options and non-options verbally.

After many hours of discussion, and involvement from Wiltshire Council's legal department which I will expand on tomorrow I have received the following from the head of highways.

Things we can do to help.

- Undertake a speed limit assessment that can be published. This can be done within a week or so. For the suggested Speed Limit Assessment we would do an investigation and report against the criteria set out in TAL 01/04 and Circular 01/13. We anticipate the output to be similar to the 2009 speed limit assessments but with a more substantive written commentary.
- Install a 40mph buffer speed limit (permanent TRO). We will need to work on a robust justification for the Statement of Reasons.
- Change signs & lines to increase visibility of crossing point and encourage motorists to drive appropriately.

Things we can't do

- Install a 30mph speed limit using a permanent order (unless the assessment above makes that recommendation which is unlikely)
- Install a 30mph speed limit using an Experimental or Temporary TRO.
- Install a 40mph buffer speed limit using an Experimental or Temporary TRO

I will present the above options and explain the non-options.

Regards Philip

Philip Whitehead
Leader of Wiltshire Council
Councillor for Urchfont and The Cannings
Wiltshire Council | County Hall | Trowbridge | Wiltshire | BA14 8JN

APPENDIX 3 TO UPC MINUTES OF THE MARCH 2021 FULL COUNCIL MEETING

EMAIL FROM MR. DAVID MYERS TO THE CLERK ON 10TH MARCH 2021

Hi Bob

I've read your report for tonight's UPC meeting, regarding perceived traffic speed issues in Wedhampton and the possible proposal to request a 20mph limit through the Village, and would like to comment.

I believe the principal area of residents' concern is the bottom end of Green Gate Road, where it turns to join High Street. If driving sensibly, it's not possible to drive at 20mph there; even in the remainder of Green Gate Road, from its junction with the A342, reaching 30mph is difficult. If not driving sensibly, that's a different matter, but a 20mph limit won't change the behaviour of idiots.

Metro-strip statistics have proved that the 20mph limit in Urchfont doesn't work. In Blackboard Lane (the only area where Speed Watch could operate), 25% of vehicles were recorded at 25mph or above, and were reported. In The Green and High Street, there are also many speeders but the statistics don't allow for a Speed Watch site, because of the skewed way in which they're calculated, yet they do prove there is speeding.

I consider that any spending on installing a 20mph limit in Wedhampton will be a gross waste of public money and will not achieve the desired result. Those who are intent on speeding will continue to ignore whatever limit is set. This has been proved by Speed Watch activity.

A road hump would be a much better solution.

*Regards
David*