



DRAFT Minutes of the Urchfont Parish Council (UPC) Full Council Meeting held in Urchfont Village Hall on Wednesday 8th December 2021 v1

Present: Councillors: Botham (MB – Chairman), Hollyman (MH – Vice Chairman), Bamber (SB), Turner (MT), Holt (SH), Gibb (HG) and Rotherford (JR)

Clerk to the Council: Lunn (BL)

Councillor for Urchfont & Bishops Cannings: Cllr Whitehead (PW)

Members of the Public (for all or part of the meeting): Mr. P Taylor, Mr. D Brock, Mr. & Mrs West, Mr. T Hill, Mr. J Rotherford (Until Item 3), Mrs H Gibb (Until Item 2)

A. INTRODUCTION

- 1. Welcome by the Chairman** – the Chairman welcomed all to the meeting, in particular Mr. Rotherford and Mrs Gibb.
- 2. Apologies:** Cllrs Moscrop (PM), Rotherham (PR) and Stevens (DS)
- 3. Application(s) for co-option** – BL confirmed that he had received 2 completed and eligible applications for co-option from Mr. Rotherford and Mrs Gibb. Councillors were given the opportunity to ask the candidates questions, and in return the applicants given the opportunity to comment.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Resolution
To approve the application from Mr. Rotherford	MB	MH	AGREED Unanimously

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Resolution
To approve the application from Mrs Gibb	SH	SB	AGREED Unanimously

BL invited both candidates to sign their respective Acceptance of Office documentation in his presence and then invited both to join the Council table.

B. PLANNING – See Separate Minutes

C. DECEMBER COUNCIL MEETING

- 1. Declarations of Interest** – None declared at the meeting
- 2. Time set aside for Public Participation and External Reports** – Mr. Taylor referred to the recent clearing of the foliage in Friars Lane, unfortunately this did not resolve the problem of trees interfering with electricity and a telegraph pole. MH stated that he had reported this to the Highways Engineer, PW advised that this should be reported direct to Utilities who will take quick action.

ACTION: FC/54/21 – MH

Mr. Taylor went on to comment on the content of Item 11 of the last minutes which infers that the problem of flooding in The Bottom has been addressed by WC. It might well have been further down Friars Lane, but flooding still regularly occurs outside his house (Rivendell). He confirmed that it is largely due to water flowing down Friars Lane from Pond Green and also down Old School Lane. MH responded that the sewer team were due to visit on 29th November to address the drain(s) opposite Rivendell and Sawmills, but they were diverted to higher priority tasks elsewhere, he will hasten a visit soonest. PW requested MH to send him copies of reports that have been made to WC Highways so that he can hasten action.

ACTION: FC/55/21 – MH

BL commented on the damaged lamp post in Friars Lane which has been partially removed but not replaced by Highways, MH confirmed that this had been reported about six months ago. PW responded that Highways will have made this safe and will replace in due course.

3. Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 10th November 2021

Proposal	Proposer	Seconded	Resolution
To approve and sign the minutes unchanged as a true and accurate record of the meeting	MB	MH	AGREED with 2 abstentions being new councillors

4. **Action List Status Review and Update Reports from the Minutes of the meeting held on 10th November 2021** not covered as separate agenda items below – BL went through the outstanding action list noting that he was aware that a number are ongoing, others were updated at the meeting. BL agreed to publish an updated listing with the January meeting agenda.

ACTION: FC/56/21 - BL

5. Finance

a. **To receive a Financial Statement and Bank Reconciliation as at 30th November 2021** – These documents had been distributed to all councillors prior to the meeting. BL confirmed that the accounts are in good order, but warned councillors that as we are now eight months into the financial year that they should ensure any unspent budget is appropriately reviewed.

b. **Initial draft budget for 2022/23** – BL confirmed that he had sent all councillors an indicative 2022/23 budget based on data available at 30th November 2021. He had only received one bid from a councillor for likely project funds. Taking account of updated fixed / running cost requirements plus an allocation of £15k for likely projects (only one bid had been received from a councillor for £2k tree felling), his predictions at this stage indicated a budget requirement for £63,857 (VAT Exclusive). This compared to a predicted income of £63,065, including a 2% rise in the PRECEPT demand leaves a deficit of £797. However, this deficit could be funded from the separate CIL account. The document also included a chart showing the effect of 1 – 10% PRECEPT increases on Property Band D Council Tax. Councillors were requested to consider the situation further pending the need to finalise a PRECEPT demand at the January meeting (Submission to WC by 18th January 2022).

ACTION: FC/57/21 - ALL

c. **Any new proposals for project or other funding in 2021/22** – SH stated that whilst grants may be available from Locality for neighbourhood plan review (as was the case for the original Plan), development and updating, he believed that UPC should put aside an amount of funds just in case. HG asked what this money would be used for? SH responded that professional advice fees may be necessary, graphic design work, public consultation and printing. BL informed councillors that Locality did pay a grant originally, but then recovered any unspent funds.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconded	Resolution
To earmark up to £2000 for NP review and development in the event that insufficient grant funds are available from elsewhere	SH	MB	AGREED Unanimously

6. **Lead Councillor, Working Groups, Clerk & other written Reports (attached at Appendix I on website only)** – to consider any issues arising or clarification required (if none then quickly move on to next agenda item)

a. **Clerks Report** – BL emphasized the meeting dates for 2022 included in his report.

b. **Councillor reports**

i. **UPEG Environmental Event** – MT did not add anything to his report. MH commented that the area behind the wall adjacent to the pond in Manor Farmyard is still in the hands of the Redcliffe Management Committee, any re-wilding proposals for this area will need Redcliffe's approval. It was confirmed that any landowner (including WC) will be approached prior to any plan is formalised

ii. **UPC Highways Report – December** – MH added that the path works had now been completed

7. **Environmental Event** – MB commented that the event on 20th November had been well received by more than 36 residents plus stallholders. A very good PowerPoint presentation was made by Nick Self from Wild Landscapes highlighting the areas identified in his recent survey that may be considered for proposed planting. A number of perceived easy wins₂ will be further developed having gained landowners

permission. Comments from the audience were largely positive. The PowerPoint presentation will be published on the Council website when finalised. Leaflet drops will be made in areas where planting is considered appropriate before proposals are made to UPC for approval.

8. Update of Neighbourhood Plan – a ‘lessons learned’ presentation was made to the UPC working group on 29th November, notes of this meeting are being prepared by MB to inform the wider UPC membership for consideration at a future meeting. Slides from this presentation are published in .pdf format with these minutes on the website minutes page.

9. ROSPA Inspection report on Children’s Play Area – SB commented that there is nothing in the report of major concern, some wooden items need attention. A more detailed review will be undertaken after Christmas and a report made to the January meeting.

10. Meet the Neighbours Event 12th November – Whilst not a lot of new residents in the Parish attended, it was nevertheless considered a good event attended by a lot of councillors. The event resulted in the 2 new co-opted councillors submitting their applications and a number of new volunteers have signed up for the Community Shop. JR considered that the event should be held annually, a vote of thanks was recorded to Liz Dark who organised the event.

11. DEFRA Bird Flu Compliance – Implementation of the new DEFRA requirements has resulted in the need to erect a secure area for the Village ducks. Whilst the cage purchased on the last occasion works, it is a nightmare in H&S terms for the volunteers due to mud in a confined space. MB proposed that a new semi-permanent larger cage extending out into the pond should be purchased which is demountable and remove the H&S issues. Elaine Bancroft has agreed to store the cage when not in use.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconded	Resolution
To earmark up to £1000 for the purchase and erection of suitable fencing and netting to create a more useable duck enclosure to cater for DEFRA restrictions now and in the future	MB	SB	AGREED Unanimously

12. Car Charging Points – MH pointed out that there is a large shortage of electric vehicle charging points nationwide, with an increasing demand on this service as more cars are purchased. He wondered whether UPC should consider installing such facilities within the Village. BL stated that he was currently considering this at his place of work, discussions indicate that it is going to be expensive as there is a lot to take account of including infrastructure costs, access and local availability of suitable power supply. PW concurred saying that WC is currently refurbishing existing and putting in new points, the fundamental point is that they will need to be self-financing.

13. Arrangements for the Christmas Tree and lights on Pond Green – In the absence of DS, it was understood that the tree will be collected from Dauntsey’s and erected by Martin Bodman on 17th December. The lights around the Pond will be erected at the same time. MB to confirm with DS and inform councillors accordingly.

ACTION: FC/58/21 - MB

14. Update on Current Issues not covered by above agenda items – None reported

15. External Meetings – None reported

16. Other Reports from Councillors

i. **Proposed Devises Train Station** – Whilst UPC has received two presentations on this initiative, SH believed that UPC is not taking sufficient interest or gaining involvement in this key initiative which will have significant impact in and for the Parish if approved (e.g. house values, more investment, travel and work opportunities). PW commented that the first business case has now gone to the Department of Transport. MB asked SH to take a lead on this important initiative, get involved and report back at a future meeting.

ACTION: FC/59/21 - SH

17. Items for Future Agenda – none raised

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.50pm by wishing all in the Parish a very happy Christmas and all the best for 2022.



Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 12th January 2022 - 7.00pm Village Hall (Conference Room)

a. CLERK'S REPORT (To be completed)

i. Finance – The Financial Summary and Bank Reconciliation as at 30th November 2021 has been distributed to all councillors prior to the meeting with this agenda, the accounts are in good order.

ii. Co-option to fill vacancies – At the time of writing I have received two completed and eligible application for co-option.

iii. 2022 Meeting Dates – the following dates have been booked with the Village Hall for Council meetings next year - 12th January, 9th February, 9th March, 13th April, 11th May, 8th June, 13th July, 10th August, 14th September, 9th November, 14th December. I still have to agree a date for October due to a clash with the Players.

Bob Lunn, Clerk to the Council

b. COUNCILLORS REPORTS

i. UPEG ENVIRONMENTAL EVENT

I was invited to attend the meeting at Friars Cottage to discuss the plans for the forthcoming Environmental Event at the Village Hall on 20th November. I have since joined this group on a permanent basis.

Discussions also included the progress of the Hedge Planting group and the 'rewilding' of certain areas of the Parish following on from the draft report by Nick Self of Wild Landscapes (Wiltshire Wildlife Trust). It was agreed to survey some of the 'rewilding' areas for their botanical diversity – notably those that had not previously been assessed. These included the 'Peppercombe corridor' (owned by the residents of the new Peppercombe development, adjacent to the Water Recycling Centre) and the area around the village pond. I volunteered to carry out these surveys and have made a start.

The event on 20th November 2021 was well attended by at least 36 members of the public. Eighteen of these expressed an interest in getting involved with UPEG or wanted to receive more information about the group and requested an email copy of Nick Self's presentation about 'rewilding' selected areas of the Parish.

Cllr. Malcolm Turner - Lead Planning UPC

ii. UPC HIGHWAYS REPORT DECEMBER 2021

- The High Street pathway phase one resurfacing has been completed, which started just to the east of the Urchfont Dental Care practice, and we have been advised that phase two will be commenced next week, continuing to just opposite the pond.
- A report has been sent to Wiltshire Highways with a map identifying three additional damaged road signs needing attention, bringing the total to seven on our list to be repaired or replaced.

Cllrs. Martyn Hollyman and Mark Botham.