

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

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

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, Mrs M Whitehead

A. INTRODUCTION

1. Welcome by the Chairman – GD welcomed all to the meeting, the 10th virtual meeting to be held with public in attendance for all except one. For the benefit of the public attending, GD explained that UPC Standing Orders required him as Chairman to have only a casting vote when proposals are made, thus they will only see other councillors voting and being counted.

2. Apologies: Cllr Cottle (SC)

B. PLANNING – See separate minutes

C. FULL COUNCIL MEETING

1. Declarations of Interest – None declared at this meeting

2. Remote Public Participation / Email input from members of the public and External Reports – GD confirmed with all members of the public attending that they did not wish to speak. BL confirmed that he had not received any email submissions.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 13th January 2021

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

4. Action List Status Review and Update Reports from the Minutes of the meeting held on 13th January 2021 – BL confirmed that the few outstanding actions are either in progress or will be addressed under items below.

5. Finance

a. Financial Summary and Bank Reconciliation as at 31st January 2021 – BL referred to his written report advising that the accounts are in good order. However, he reiterated the fact that as we approach the end of the financial year it is important that any outstanding or impending invoices are submitted to him for payment prior to the 31st March.

b. Projects Budget 20/21 – No new or updated proposals presented.

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

a. Clerks Report – no update given or questions posed.

b. Councillor Reports

i. UPC Highways – no update given or questions posed.

ii. Farmers Field – GD noted that there are 15 trees left to be felled, PR advised that this will be completed by around mid-March. PR also confirmed that two operatives are working at a distance in accordance with COVID-19 regulations. GD asked councillors if they have any concerns about this work arrangement in the continuing COVID situation, none expressed any concern.

iii. UPEG – Further to his written report, MH reported that Richard Bromley is now working on the UPC Carbon Footprint having received the requested data from BL. The idea of a community composting scheme has been dropped, but UPEG is keen to get UPC views on the purchase of 2 or 3 community food waste bins for the Parish. TH commented that he had purchased and is using a food composter from WC, he expressed concern that a community scheme would fill up too quickly, would need to be managed and would probably not compost correctly. TH could not support the community idea but would encourage householders to purchase their own bins, MK suggested that UPEG should encourage self-purchase. PW also expressed concern that community bins could not be controlled in terms of the type of waste being deposited and that is not a good idea. PW suggested that more effort should be put into encouraging people to buy less food in the first place to minimise waste and by so doing reduce associated packaging, refrigeration etc. pollution. MB went on to refer to Tree Week in November / December this year when grants will be available for planting and a number of community groups can be involved. GC confirmed that Urchfont School will take part. It has been suggested that the path to Oakfrith Wood would be a good option for selective planting of trees and shrubs, Councillors signified that the pathway is a sensible option. MB agreed to report back to UPEG.

7. Proposed UPC Complaints Procedure Revision – BL explained that experience dealing with recent complaints had indicated a lack of clarity in the existing procedure. In his view this can be corrected by use of a flowchart to differentiate between the different types of complaints and the routes to be taken, hence his proposed new version of the procedure which was distributed to all councillors prior to the meeting. MK commented that the flow chart is good and provides the necessary clarity.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Resolution
To approve and publish the proposed Procedure as presented	GD	MB	AGREED unanimously

8. COVID-19 Restrictions – local reports – TH advised that although Day Lewis Pharmacy has a driver to deliver prescriptions, this service has recently been overwhelmed with requests. As a result he has agreed to collect and deliver some prescriptions to the shop and individuals on a weekly basis, this to be reviewed at the end of February. TH had also received a request from the WC Wellness Hub to collect and deliver essential clothing to a person who had recently been moved to the Dale Care home in Market Lavington, this he agreed to do.

GD reiterated the fact that current legislation as a result of COVID permits council meetings to be held remotely prior to 7th May 2021, no indication has yet been given as to whether this legislation will be extended – the situation will be dependent on the COVID-19 situation at that time. In preparation for the potential reintroduction of physical meetings, BL is making provisional arrangements for the Village Hall to be used for the 12th May meeting but using the main hall to facilitate social distancing if required. BL noted that meeting timings may be different to accommodate other Hall users.

9. Wedhampton Issues – BL had distributed two emails to all councillors prior to the meeting from Wedhampton residents; one from Susannah Lampard dealing with perceived speeding in Wedhampton and the

status of the footpath to Planks Farm Shop; and the second from Rebekah Jones on increased dog mess and the need for more litter bins in Wedhampton.

Perceived speeding in Wedhampton – whilst road conditions make it unlikely that the 30mph limit is being exceeded, it is very possible that some drivers are driving too fast for the road conditions and not taking enough care around the blind bend from the High Street to Greengate Road. PW suggested that the email should be sent to CATG by BL, copied to him, requesting consideration of implementing a 20mph zone and / or other measures throughout Wedhampton. This process may take a while but is worth pursuing.

ACTION: FC/09/21 – BL

Pathway from Wedhampton to Plank’s Farm / Urchfont – PW recognised the original suggestion made by ex-councillor Bill Donald to improve the A342 crossing points, but was expecting proposals to be made for WC consideration once other matters had been agreed with the land owner. PW has heard nothing further since the proposal was taken over by now ex-councillor Philip Cottell. GD agreed to re-visit this proposal with Bill Donald and the land owner with the objective of submitting proposals to WC as originally intended.

ACTION: FC/10/21 – GD

Increasing Dog Waste and need for additional litter bins – Not picking up dog waste by a few irresponsible dog owners is a widespread problem as publicised in UPC Redhorn News articles, especially with increased footfall of local and not so local people exercising their dogs during Lockdown. There is little more that can be done unless people are caught in the act and reported to the WC dog warden. However, councillors did recognise that the lack of litter bins does not help the situation, BL confirmed that the only litter bin currently in Wedhampton is way down The Cartway, a distance from the High Street and Greengate Road. MK and TH supported the idea of additional bin(s) to support Wedhampton. In response to a question, BL advised that a bin similar to the last one purchased for Urchfont and sited by the Farmers Field layby costs £165 for the bin with liner + £72 for a ground anchor. Additional costs for emptying the bin may apply. LC suggested that perhaps one bin could be purchased in the first instance to see whether the situation improves.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Resolution
To approve the purchase of one bin for Wedhampton, location to be agreed with Wedhampton residents.	LC	MK	AGREED unanimously

ACTION: FC/11/21 – BL

10. Approved Tree Works – In the absence of SC, no updates could be given on tree works approved at the last meeting or the required written justification for use of less than three quotes which remains outstanding (**Action: FC/05/21 – SC**). GD requested an update at the March meeting. GC agreed to check on progress.

11. CPRE Best Kept Village Competition 2021 – GD had spoken to Clare Cannon and Peter Cook who are both CPRE judges and consensus indicated that if taking part is what matters then Urchfont should submit an application and take part in May/June having won the medium village competition in 2019. It might be that the Village will have to participate on a “take us as you find us” basis due to the evolving COVID situation and rely on individuals rather than organised working parties tidying where possible. TH suggested that villagers should be encouraged to individually do their bit by ensuring that their own property is presentable and maybe even tidying public areas as they have done in previous years. MK agreed that a very positive message has to be sent to villagers.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Resolution
To approve the submission of an application when requested by CPRE later in February.	GD	TH	AGREED unanimously

12. Update on Current Parish Issues not covered by above agenda items

- a. **Devizes Gateway Consultation** – GD encouraged all to contribute to this consultation process.
ACTION: FC/12/21 – ALL
- b. **New Tennis Court Pavilion** – TH reported that the new pavilion has been constructed, although some fitting out works have yet to be completed. He thanked UPC for its financial contribution, and Geoff Potter and Will Corke for their help.
- c. **Cut Barbed Wire on path to Oakfrith Wood** – in response to a question from GD, BL confirmed that the best way to repair the damage is still be considered with the UPC maintenance contractor.

13. External Meetings – Attendance of GD and TH at a virtual WC meeting on 1st February 2021 to be informed about the Wiltshire Council Local Plan and consultation process – see report at Item 7 of the 10th February 2021 Planning Minutes.

14. Councillors' Other Reports – MH reported that the Community Shop are still looking for a part time manager to cover 5 hours on 2 days per week. Rodney Gillington had advised that sales are still buoyant during lockdown.

15. Items for Future Agenda

- a. **Pathway to Oakfrith Wood** (To be addressed when physical meetings in Village Hall are restarted with public attendance)
- b. **B3098 Speed Zones** – update from Wiltshire Council – PW requested that this be on the March 2021 agenda when he hoped to provide some options for consideration.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.32pm

Date of Next Scheduled Meeting: 10th March 2021

APPENDIX TO 10th FEBRUARY 2021 UPC MEETING MINUTES

a. CLERK'S REPORT

1. Update on Clerk's actions from January 2021 Meeting –

FC/02/21 – Submit PRECEPT requirement to WC before deadline of 18th January – see item 3 below.

FC/03/21 – Notified Redhorn Treasurer of delay to payment of 2021 contribution on 15th January 2021.

FC/04/21 – Approved Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Remote Meeting Protocol published on website on 15th January 2021.

FC/06/21 – Updated UPC Highways Survey distributed to all councillors and Philip Whitehead on 14th January 2021.

FC/08/21 – Discussion with Mark Goddard ongoing about best way to repair cut fencing on Oakfrith Path.

2. Finance – The Financial Summary and Bank Reconciliation as at 31st January 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 £17,612 is higher than the target and last month primarily because of:

- the unexpected Small Business Grant received from WC;
- current predicted spend by the end of the financial year and;
- receipt of a VAT refund of £1833.61 in January making a total of £13,351 recovered for the period up to 31st December 2020.

The Reserve will undoubtedly change over the next two months as available funds are utilised.

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

3. PRECEPT – As approved at the December and confirmed at the January meeting, I submitted the 21/22 requirement for £52,103.50 to WC on 15th January 2021. This will equate to an increase of 93 pence per annum on the Parish Council tax for a Band D property.

4. UPC Carbon Footprint Data – I have provided Richard Bromley with an initial attempt at providing necessary data to facilitate preparation of a UPC carbon footprint as part of the UPEG activity.

5. Wedhampton Issues – I have received concerns from Wedhampton residents regarding increasing dog waste not being picked up, lack of litter bins (only one in hamlet), traffic speed and the footpath to Urchfont. One email has been received and will be copied to councillors with this agenda. Another email is expected and will be forwarded when received.

Bob Lunn, Clerk to the Council

b. COUNCILLOR REPORTS

i. UPC Highways Report - Following our six monthly survey in January, Mark and I had a remote Zoom meeting on 19th January with Richard Dobson from Wiltshire Highways.

We expressed our disappointment at the lack of progress in dealing with outstanding issues in the second half of 2020. This contrasted with the first half, when 17 out of 61 problems had been addressed. The list has now grown back to 54. Richard agreed that the list must be reduced, and we discussed all items, highlighting and agreeing which should take priority, and what he felt could be reasonable achieved over the next few months. These included in particular various roads resurfaced, the High Street footpath resurfaced (within six months), re-instatement of many worn road markings, verge repairs (notably opposite Pond Green) and blocked drains. Uphill and the road up to Redhorn Hill are especially bad with many deep potholes likely to cause damage to motor vehicles.

It was, however, pointed out that we have been pleased with the Parish Steward, who has been actively filling many potholes and clearing leaf debris, and the Wiltshire Sewer Team who have responded well when we have contacted them.

There were plans to hot fill a long stretch of Uphill, commencing at Franklin's Farm and working towards the village on 29th January. This has not happened, although due to recent rainfall much of the road is currently badly flooded.

Cllrs. Martyn Hollyman & Mark Botham

ii. Farmer's Field

The storage container has now been ordered and paid for. Delivery is expected around mid-February. We are currently waiting for an update.

Approximately 15 trees are remaining of those that were identified to be felled. These will be felled by the end of this season. Reassessment of the remaining trees will be carried out later in the year.

Cllr Maria Kemp

iii. UPC update from the UPEG virtual meeting 1st February 2021

Present: Lisa Kinnaird, Katharine Wale, Peter Newell, Sam Dixon, Liz Clifton Page, Mark Botham, Richard Bromley

Apologies: Graham Day, Lewis Cowen

Key points

- Richard Bromley received the account details from Bob Lunn enabling him to commence a first pass at estimating UPC's carbon footprint.
- The proposals to establish a community composting scheme have been modified and are now focussed on encouraging people to make their own compost. However, UPEG requests UPC's view on purchasing 2 / 3 food composting bins to be located at strategic points round the village as WC do not collect food waste. The bins are currently available from WC at the heavily discounted price of £50
- Tree Week 2021 will take place at the end of November / early December. Tree grants are available to provide free trees / hedging plants to support the scheme. There are various criteria associated with the grant one of which is involving local children. It would make sense to make use of the grant to provide trees / hedging to plant along the path to Oakfrith Wood (filling in gaps from the end of the tennis courts to the entrance to the wood). This is an ideal location for the children to get involved in the planting and gain a first hand understanding of the need to plant trees and protect the local environment. UPC to consider at the February meeting. MB to contact Graham Creasey to discuss the potential involvement of the school.
- The ongoing use of Facebook has seen the membership grow to 118, an increase of 56 since the January meeting.
- Sam and Liz are going to research the recycling of crisp packets and other items that are "tricky " to recycle and arrange collection for.
- MB to report to UPC in March on the details of UPEG's environment event currently planned for July, COVID-19 restrictions permitting.

Cllr Mark Botham