



DRAFT Minutes of the Urchfont Parish Council (UPC) Full Council Meeting held in Urchfont Village Hall on Wednesday 14TH February 2024. Present: Councillors: Moscrop (PM – Chair) Bamber (SB – Vice Chair), Hill (TH), Gibb (HG), Holt (SH) Shears (SS) and Rotherford (JR)

Present: Councillor’s: Moscrop (PM – Chair) Bamber (SB – Vice Chair), Hill (TH), Gibb (HG), Shears (SS) and Rotherford (JR)

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

Members of the Public (for all or part of the meeting): Mr and Mrs Holt, Mr and Mrs Crawford, Mrs Craik, Mr MacPhearson, Mr Hills, Malcolm Smith, Mrs Jean Willis, Nicky Hammond, Brenda Potter, Pauleen Kendall, Richard Harding

A. INTRODUCTION

- 1. Welcome by the Chair - PM welcomed everyone to the meeting.**
- 2. Apologies** Cllr Rotherham (PR) Bob Lunn (Clerk) BL

B. PLANNING – See Separate Agenda

C. FEBRUARY FULL COUNCIL MEETING

- 1. Declarations of Interest** There were no declarations of interest.
- 2. Time set aside for Public Participation and External Reports**

Malcolm Smith asked that he is permitted to speak regarding the pathway to the school and the state of the roads when those issue are reached in the Agenda. (Item 4 (c) and 6 (b.10)).

3. Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 10th January 2024

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Resolution
To approve and sign the minutes unchanged as a true and accurate record of the meeting	PM	TH	Approved with one abstention (SH as he was not in attendance at the last meeting)

4. Action List Status Review and Update Reports from the Minutes of the meeting held on 10th January 2024

PM asked that all Councillors review any outstanding actions and inform the Clerk of any updates.

5. Finance

a. To receive a Financial Statement and Bank Reconciliation as at 31st January 2024

The financial summary and bank statement was distributed prior to the meeting. PM asked that any outstanding bills and/or expenses are submitted to the Clerk before financial year end. PM asked

that the Councillors' ratify for audit purposes all individual payments that were made in January.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Resolution
To ratify individual payments made during January 2024 as shown on the bank reconciliation statement.	PM	SB	AGREED unanimously

b. Setting the 24/25 Precept Requirement – The agreed increase of 2% to the Precept has been submitted to Wiltshire Council and has been acknowledged.

c. Section 106 funding from Hazel Green Development

PM expressed her frustration that Mr. Potter has still not been paid for the works undertaken last year to the pathway at the school. Wiltshire Council have now forwarded the Section 106 funds (£9,000) which are owed to Mr. Potter to UPC, and it is UPC's desire to transfer this amount to the school so that the outstanding invoice can be settled. Despite PM and TH meeting with the Head of the school, and numerous correspondence with the Chair of Governor's, the school still have not supplied the Clerk (BL) with their bank details so the monies cannot be paid. UPC are not happy with the way Mr. Potter has been treated over this issue. The chair of governor's (Mr. Ian Walker) approved the works at the time, and the works have not been disputed. It appears that the school did not follow the correct procedures in contracting these works. The School have now placed a retrospective application for these works to obtain approval, and we await an update. Meanwhile this ongoing issue is affecting UPC's previously good relationship with Mr. Potter, who is now reluctant to carry out any further works for UPC until this matter is settled.

Chair closed the meeting for public participation

Malcolm Smith commented that he is very ashamed of UPC and that Mr. Potter should just be paid. He stated that the council will gain a reputation for not paying its bills and that contractors will not want to carry out any works for UPC. PM clarified that as frustrated as UPC are over this issue, they cannot simply pay Mr. Potter directly as the works were not carried out on behalf of UPC or on UPC land. The works were contracted by the school and are on school property. PW commented that it would be an illegal action for UPC to pay the outstanding invoice amount directly to Mr. Potter. Ultimately the school gave permission for the works to go ahead, it is frustrating as the works are not actually costing the school anything. UPC agreed that the situation is ridiculous.

Chair reopened the meeting

d. Proposal from 1st Urchfont Cubs for a Lifebuoy to be placed at the pond – SB's report on this issue was circulated with the agenda. The cost of a simple lifebuoy and rope line with a metal wall mounting is £71.38 Inc. VAT. A more substantive buoy could be purchased, which is housed in a pole mounted casing, but this would be an unnecessary expense considering the location (probably to be mounted on the wall of the duck house). HG commented that it is good to see young people in the village getting involved and it needs to be encouraged.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Resolution
To approve the purchase of a lifebuoy for the pond with a budget of up to £130.00	SB	PM	Agreed unanimously

e. **Proposal to upgrade Recreation Ground Play Equipment** SB's report on this proposal was circulated with the agenda. SB met with Playdale at the site in January. Works required will total £1,122.06 (inc VAT). It is hoped that this cost can be reduced due to a refund of £150 on (the cost of the initial inspection visit) being credited. The quotation from Playdale may be revised slightly as it was only valid for 30 days. SB to confirm with Playdale.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Resolution
To approve an amount of up to £1,300 for the remedial/repair works to the play equipment at the recreation ground.	SB	HG	Agreed unanimously.

6. Lead Councillor, Working Groups, Clerk & other written Reports (attached at Appendix I on website version only)

a. Clerks Written Reports

As circulated – no further comments

b. Councillor reports

- 1. Big Help Out 2024:** This is an Urchfont Cubs/Scout initiative. Roger Chadwick has asked if there are any areas within the parish that they might be able to assist with. HG has discussed possible help with some improvements to the access at Oakfrith path. Other suggestions included the cemetery that needs some attention and also the recreation ground.

PM to go back to Roger Chadwick regarding litter picking, cemetery tidy. UPC do have available space to take any litter collected

ACTION PM

Suggested that HG liaises with Friends of Oakfrith wood to discuss the Oakfrith works.

ACTION HG/TH/SB

- 2. Wedhampton Defibrillator** PM has chased the manufacturer who said that they had contacted Anthea Donald requesting the unit is packaged up and returned, but this has not been done. PM has now removed the unit and has packaged up ready for collection this week. Once findings are received on the condition of the unit a decision can be made as to whether it can be repaired or if it needs to be replaced.

ACTION PM

- 3. School Path** – This subject was covered above under item 5 c

- 4. Boundary entry signs for Wedhampton** – PM proposed that signs for both Wedhampton and Lydeway, similar to the Urchfont sign should be provided. PM to discuss with BL.

ACTION PM

- 5. LHFIG update.** PM advised that the works at Wedhampton are planned, namely 20 mile an hour speed limit and no exit at top of the high street and that the work at The Croft (dropped curb to access the green by the allotment) has been approved and location advised and agreed with Joyce Organ (Chair of the Allotment Society). Work should be undertaken soon.

- 6. Pre-surface dressing patching** – Some of the planned dressing works have been cancelled, this

was due to the state of the roads being too poor to patch, they require more significant works. Notification has now come through that the very poor stretch of road on the A342 towards Churton will now be repaired in April.

- Speed Watch** – this is ongoing. PW is going to supply data from historical metro count reports but some fresh data is also needed prior to Speed watch being reinstated. Need to confirm location for these and UPC to make application for new metro count.

ACTION BL

- Lifebuoy for the Village pond** – Discussed above in Finance Item 5d
- Update on Recreation Ground equipment – proposed works and costs** – Discussed above Item 5e
- Highways Issues** – TH and SB met with Andy Cadwallader (Wiltshire Highways). AC advised that up to four incorrect/damaged road signs can be replaced at their cost. Suggested signs include the sign at the entrance to Hags Lane/The Paddock that is incorrect. This needs to be replaced with new wording “Hags Lane No’s 1 & 2 Leading to The Paddock” and the second damaged sign to be replaced with a new one and be placed 40m into the actual Paddock. Also the damaged/dirty sign at Foxley Fields to be replaced. Secondly TH and SB discussed the metal barrier at the bottom of School lane with AC. The barrier is there to prevent cyclists passing through on their bikes, but it is also preventing access for pushchairs and disability scooters. This results in people having to use Friars Lane, which is a dangerous route for scooters and pushchairs as there is no pavement. If there are funds for four signs to be replaced PM asked that the one at the bottom of Greengate Road, Wedhampton that has been damaged is also replaced. TH to report back.

ACTION TH

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Resolution
That the road signs listed above are replaced and that the barrier at the bottom of School Lane is removed.	TH	SS	Agreed Unanimously

- UPC Highways Report** – The highways report was circulated to with the Agenda. Noted that gully cleaning can be undertaken by the Wiltshire contractor (via Bob Lunn). TH to identify areas to BL for action. Blocked drains in Blackboard Lane that were highlighted to AC have now been dealt with. Gully outside of Val Brockie’s house has been looked at. TH has cleared the ditch outside of Carina Cottage at Uphill but this is only a temporary measure. TH has discussed with the landowners Mr. Charlie King and Mr. Jamie King. They have agreed that it is their responsibility so we await action.

Malcolm Smith commented that despite him regularly reporting issues on the My Wiltshire App, these issues are often then shown as closed without any remedial action appearing to have taken place. PW said this is an anomaly of the reporting system, and that if an action is shown as ‘closed’ it means that the action has been passed to the relevant department to remedy. PW emphasized the need to continue to report issues. PW stated that Highways budgets have increased substantially. JR stated that we should be making more use of the Parish Steward who is available to do patching of potholes etc. BL can contact him directly as he is available two days a month for work in our parish. Need to discuss fully at next meeting. To be added to agenda. PM thanked TH and SB for their work on highways issues.

ACTION: Item for next months agenda – to discuss and have visibility of Parish Stewards days allocated to parish and tasks assigned
BL

- Allotment Tenancy Agreement** – The Allotment Association have updated the Tenancy Agreement for all allotment holders. This was circulated prior to the meeting.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Resolution
That the updated Urchfont Allotment Association Tenancy Agreement dated 2024 is approved and can be implemented by the Association	SB	TH	Agreed unanimously

9. Urchfont Pond Algae Problem Proposal – Algae management proposal by Eric Alquist last month is ongoing. The bore hole suggestion is still on the table, but in the meantime EA has been treating the pond with a safe calcium treatment which should help the situation and hopefully prevent damaging algae developing, particularly in warmer weather. Eric has purchased these materials and needs to be reimbursed from the pond budget.

Latest expense incurred can be taken from the pre agreed allocated funding. Additional proposal was not required (**this was clarified after the meeting by BL**).

10. Best Kept Village Competition 2024 – Discussion to decide if the village will take part in this event for 2024. TH commented that a working party isn't needed for this, but we can all do our bit, and leading up to the judging we can promote on Facebook. PM suggested that there is also a section for Hamlets to enter, and therefore proposed that both Wedhampton and Lydeaway are entered in this category.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Resolution
That Urchfont enters the 2024 Best Kept Village Competition in the category of Medium Village and that both Wedhampton and Lydeaway are entered under the Hamlet category.	PM	SB	Agreed unanimously

11. Proposed WC cuts in funding for Visit Wiltshire – Wiltshire Council are no longer going to fund Visit Wiltshire and they are asking for support in lobbying for continued funding. PW stated that their five year contract is ending and that tourism will be taken back into the control of WC. Wiltshire as a county is not attracting as many visitor numbers in comparison with other counties and WC have been disappointed with Visit Wiltshire's performance. WC have also submitted correspondence on this matter and have set up in house team to look at this and boost tourism. WC have developed tourism aids on their app which is more than Visit Wiltshire with further enhancements, towns, events and the likes planned to be included.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Resolution
That Urchfont Parish Council do not support Visit Wiltshire's request for assistance with lobbying for continued funding.	PM	SS	Agreed unanimously

12. Litter – Helen Mathews recently commented on the village Facebook page concerns on the amount of litter on the footpaths around the village. A small group of people got together for a litter picking session. PM offered thanks to Helen and all those who assisted. Helen M suggested that notices could be placed in areas that had been litter picked to inform people. Consensus was that it's probably better to promote on Facebook page as signs/notices can look untidy.

Proposal	Proposer	Secunder	Resolution
Not to promote signage but to support the valuable work volunteers undertake in this area via Facebook.	HG	PM	Agreed Unanimously

13. Councillor Recruitment – Thanks to the recent recruitment campaign there have been four expressions of interest from parishioners in joining the council. One of those is not eligible yet due to residency rules, but all will be followed up. PM thanked JR for his initiative with this scheme which will hopefully see the number of councillors’ increase over the coming months.

14. Speed Indicator Signs on the B3098 – This is ongoing but cannot move forward at the moment due to the issue with payments to Mr. Potter.

15. Urchfont Parish Neighbourhood Plan The minutes of the last NP meeting were circulated with the agenda for all councillors to read. Draft copy of Aims and Objectives need to be approved. BL would then put on the UPC website and in the Redhorn. Action WG will provide an update at the next meeting

Proposal	Proposer	Secunder	Resolution
16. To approve the Draft copy of the NP Aims and Objectives and to agree promotion to ask landowners who may have suitable land for development to come forward. WG will provide an update at the next meeting.	TH	JR	Agreed Unanimously

17. Crookwood Lane Lay-By – There has to date been no contact from Acorn Developments regarding the requested repairs to the damage at the lay-by. Site is deteriorating. Needs to be chased up, along with the damage to Top Green and the Crookwood Lane bank. These repairs need to be carried out as soon as possible, before the site is finished and the builders have left. Needs to be followed up and if no response may need to get a solicitors letter sent to them. **ACTION TH / SH**

18. Three New Litter Bins – These have now been installed. PM thanked those who assisted TH to install, including Kieron Bamber. The bins still require the stickers attaching with the contact number to call if bins are full. BL to provide the stickers. **ACTION BL**

19. Update on Current Issues not covered by above agenda items –

- a. PW asked that the issue regarding the 20mph speed signs in Urchfont be discussed at the next meeting.

- b. TH advised that the replacement Christmas lights for the pond area will remain on hold until next Christmas.
- c. HG would like to proceed with discussions on improving access to Oakfrith by putting scalplings down at the start of the path to facilitate entry. Suggested this needs consultation with Friends of Oakfrith and Rights of Way. To discuss at the March meeting. **ACTION HG**

20. External Meetings None Reported.

21. Other Reports from Councillors – None reported

22. Items for Future Agenda Identified above.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.40 p.m.

Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 13th March 2024 - 7.00pm Village Hall (Conference Room)