



DRAFT Minutes of the Urchfont Parish Council (UPC) Full Council Meeting held in Urchfont Village Hall on Wednesday 9th August 2023

Present: Councillor's: Moscrop (PM - Chair), Bamber (SB), Hill (TR), Rotherford (JR), Simon Holt (SH) and Gibb (HG)

Clerk to the Council: Lunn (BL)

Councilor for Urchfont & Bishops Cannings: Whitehead (PW)

Members of the Public (for all or part of the meeting): Chris Smith, Brenda Potter, Graham Houlden, Nicky Hammond, Paul Scarfe (Redhorn News), Brian Taylor (Redhorn News)

A. INTRODUCTION

- 1. Welcome by the Chair** – PM welcomed all to the meeting and asked that comments are kept brief due to the number of items on the agenda.
- 2. Apologies:** Cllr Rotherham (PR)
- 3. Nomination(s) for Councillor Co-Option** – The Council currently has four vacancies. One valid nomination form has been received from Sally Shears, a resident of Lydeway. Unfortunately Sally was not available to attend this meeting and so consideration of her co-option was deferred until the September meeting.
- 4. Ratification of decisions taken at 12th July meeting due to less than the required number of councillor's attending.**
 - i. To approve and sign the minutes of the 14th June 2023 meeting**
 - ii. To ratify all individual payments made in June 2023**
 - iii. Financial Assistance Application from the Community Shop (approved at meeting on 14th June but reconsidered at the 12th July meeting but without the need for a further vote)**

PM commented that further correspondence had been received from Mr. Myers relating to item 4iii which had been distributed to all councillors prior to the meeting. In particular the perception that he had been the subject of a personal attack by one member of the public which was recorded in the minutes of the July meeting. PM stated that anyone attending a Council meeting has the right to speak under 'Public Participation', whilst the Council does not condone verbal personal attacks, if it is perceived that one has been made it is not for the Council to seek apologies, this is an issue for the two parties to resolve outside of Council meetings.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Resolution
To ratify the resolutions made at the meeting on 12th July 2023.	SH	PM	AGREED with one abstention due to absence from the meeting.

B. PLANNING – See Separate Agenda

C. JULY FULL COUNCIL MEETING

- 1. Declarations of Interest** – None notified at the meeting
- 2. Time set aside for Public Participation and External Reports** –

Community Shop - Nicky Hammond expressed the view that no member of the public should be verbally attacked at a Council meeting, she believed that such comments are very offensive. She supported the view expressed by the Chair under item 4. She also expressed the view that some other members of the public are

too afraid to make comments about the Community Shop, its operation and the likelihood of closure if not supported and used.

Uphill Road Conditions – Nicky Hammon expressed the view that the ditch outside her property had been blocked as a result of building works in an adjacent property. A spring which used to flow into the ditch is blocked and now results in a permanent puddle. She also highlighted the state of the road outside the 'Brockies' and expressed the view that Uphill is a second class area when it comes to maintenance. TH expressed the view that these issues should be included in the next UPC highways survey. PM stated that there is a clear need to establish responsibility for the various issues raised.

ACTION: FC/56/23 – PM/TH

Wild Flower Planting – As a resident, PW expressed the view that various areas planted in Urchfont had not been maintained and are seriously out of control. He particularly cited the bank behind the lay-by in Crookwood Lane. He requested that this issue be an agenda item at the September meeting. SH agreed that the site in Blackboard Lane is dead due largely to overhanging trees.

ACTION: FC/57/23 – BL

New School Pathway and entrance to Oakfrith Pathway – Brenda Potter stated that works will commence next week.

3. Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 12th July 2023

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Resolution
To approve and sign the minutes unchanged as a true and accurate record of the meeting	TH	JR	AGREED with one abstention due to absence from the meeting.

4. **Action List Status Review and Update Reports from the Minutes of the meeting held on 12th July 2023** – BL had amended and distributed the latest outstanding action listing to all councillors but he had not received any further updates as requested. PM referred to Action 52 regarding the Standing Order requirement to have resolutions ratified at a subsequent meeting if less than 6 members are in attendance. If it cannot be established that such is a statutory requirement, then she will propose an amendment which is based on half of the current members at any time rather than total seats.

5. Finance

a. **To receive a Financial Statement and Bank Reconciliation as at 31st July 2023** - BL had distributed the Financial Summary and Bank Reconciliation statement as at 31st July 2023 to all councillors prior to the meeting. He confirmed that the accounts are in good order and that the internal audit of the 222/23 accounts had been completed without comment or observation. The accounts plus required supplementary evidence are now with the external auditors, their report is expected in late September. JR questioned why the insurance payment for 23/24 is expected to be significantly more than in previous years, BL responded that unfortunately the summary contained an error in that line which he will correct. The insurance payment is actually less this year. The error has no impact on the overall account balance.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Resolution
To ratify the list of payments made during July and listed on the Bank Reconciliation statement.	PM	TH	AGREED unanimously

b. **Request for funding for new Gateway Signs in Crookwood Lane** – BL explained that the gateway signs had not been replaced following damage by a person or persons unknown and also because of the development works ongoing in Crookwood Lane. However, the gates can now be replaced, BL requested approval of a budget up to £1500. TH asked whether three quotes will be needed, BL suggested that this requirement should be waived as all the Gateway signs for the Village have been manufactured and supplied by one company. Whilst it had been intended to relocate the new signs further out of the Village, PW suggested that they would sit better adjacent to the 20mph signs which he believed will themselves be

relocated to embrace the lay-by. PW agreed to check this with the WC Highways Engineer.

ACTION: FC/58/23 - PW

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Resolution
To waive the three quote requirement and approve a budget of up to £1500 to replace the Gateway Signs on Crookwood Lane	SH	PM	AGREED unanimously

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

- a. **Clerks Report** – No clarification or addition to the report at Appendix 1.
- b. **Councillor reports** – None Submitted

7. Redhorn News – Paul Scarfe, Treasure of Redhorn News, made an appeal for funds based on notes which were subsequently sent to BL post the meeting and can be seen at Appendix III to these minutes on the website version only. In essence the appeal was for UPC to contribute £1600 for the 23/24 year to facilitate free delivery to all properties in the Parish. Further information has been requested to clearly demonstrate the extent of funds required so that the matter can be discussed at the September meeting. In the meantime it was agreed that the number of properties requiring the magazine in the Parish should be verified.

8. CPRE Best Kept Village – BL confirmed that Urchfont had won the County round of this competition and are due to be presented with the Standard on Sunday 24th September. Congratulations to everyone in the Village who helped to achieve this success. PM thanked BL for initiating, preparing and submitting the application form and supporting documentation which led to this result. We have to collect the Standard from the previous winner in advance of this date and are expected to provide a light lunch for the presentation party, details to be advised by CPRE. BL will be soliciting help for both of these actions in due course, presentation will be held at the Village Hall and Standard subsequently installed on Pond Green as on the last occasion.

ACTION: FC/59/23 - BL

9. Lead Councillor Roles and Responsibilities – PM stated that the Highways role had not yet been attributed, this will include undertaking six monthly surveys, liaising with the WC Highways Engineer and potentially attending LHFIFG meetings. Martyn Hollyman has already agreed to do the next survey, SB and Th volunteered to do the survey with Martyn. SB agreed to arrange a date with Martyn. TH congratulated Mark Botham and Martyn Hollyman for the excellent work and results they had achieved via the survey process.

ACTION: FC/60/23 - SB

10. Speed Indicator Signs of the B3098 – PM thanked Martyn Hollyman and JR for visiting the supplier in Fordingbridge to collect the sign and posts having previously not been able to get a response. JR commented that the sign is in several parts and it is not yet clear whether it will work properly and be calibrated correctly when assembled. It is all now with Geoff Potter to install the posts and sign.

11. Urchfont Parish Neighbourhood Plan – See latest WG minutes at Appendix II on website version only. SH stated that the deadline for the return of the survey has been extended, to date around 70 had been returned. A flash sign will shortly be put on posters to remind people to respond. TH asked whether other councillors want to attend WG meetings, the next being on 29th August 2023. SH identified that a specific NP website is being designed which will be reference from the UPC website. TH asked whether UPC approved of using NP allocated budget for the website production, around £220 per annum ongoing. BL stated that this could come from the 23/24 budget but subsequent years will need to be separately approved.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Resolution
To approve use of £220 from the existing 23/24 NP budget to fund the NP website.	SH	SB	AGREED unanimously

12. UPEG – SH commented that UPEG activity is a bit quiet at present, a meeting will be held next week. He also stated that he is now the only councillor on UPEG and he wondered whether any others could get involved. PM asked whether there is any communication with other community groups in the Parish, SH responded no. SH agreed to promote interaction.

ACTION: FC/61/23 - SH

13. Update on Current Issues not covered by above agenda items, including:

- i. **Line Painting at bus stop opposite Crooks Lane** (road markings funding approved at June 2023 meeting, new bus stop damaged) – SH stated that the painting required confirmation from BL.

ACTION: FC/62/23 - BL

- ii. **Notice Board for Foxley Fields** – BL reported that he had this board on his list of items to be purchased, he would action this as soon as possible.

ACTION: FC/63/23 - BL

- iii. **Removal of tree on Baish Right of Way** – a number of complaints had been received concerning blockage of the lane by a contractor vehicle and also about debris being left along the lane. At the request of a member of the community, a branch was removed at short notice on the instruction of UPC due to it being considered unsafe by increasingly drooping over a public right of way. The van was necessarily parked in the lane to facilitate this removal and was not considered to be entirely blocking access. The debris was left in place by the tree surgeon to hold back stinging nettles and other growth on the bank.

- iv. **Pathway alongside Church** – JR reported that this pathway which was resurfaced last year is becoming overgrown by weeds. TH commented that the weeds had now been cleared by the Rights of Way Group.

- v. **First Responders** – JR reported frustration that a couple of Urchfont applications had been received by Ambulance HQ but are unlikely to be actioned until 2024.

- vi. **Fencing along pathway to Oakfrith Wood** – SB reported that the newly replaced fencing had been damaged. She did not believe it was due to vandalism, more likely by children climbing over to retrieve footballs. PR had been approached to undertake repairs, but said that he was too busy elsewhere. PM was of the view that as PR had installed the replacement fencing, he should undertake repairs ensuring that the fence is robust enough, she agreed to speak with PR.

ACTION: FC/64/23 - PM

14. External Meetings – None reported

15. Other Reports from Councillors – None reported

16. Items for Future Agenda – none in addition to those mentioned above.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.27pm.

Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 13th September 2023 - 7.00pm Village Hall (Conference Room)

APPENDIX I TO AUGUST 2023 UPC MINUTES

a. CLERK'S REPORT

i. **Finance** – Copies of the Financial Summary and Bank Reconciliation on 31st July 2023 will be distributed to all councillors prior to the meeting. The accounts are in good order.

ii. **Audits** – The internal audit of 22/23 accounts has been completed by Paul Papworth-Smith without comment or observation, this has been recorded in the AGAR report for External Audit. The AGAR and supporting documentation / evidence was submitted to the External Auditors (PKF Littlejohn LLP) before the agreed extended deadline of 31st July 2023.

iii. **Councillor Vacancies** – The Council currently has FOUR vacancies, with one application for co-option received.

iv. **CPRE Best Kept Village Competition** – We have been notified that URCHFONT has won the County round competition in the Kennet Medium Village category, well done to all who contributed to this success.

Bob Lunn, Clerk to the Council

b. **COUNCILLORS WRITTEN REPORTS** – None Submitted

APPENDIX II TO AUGUST 23 UPC MINUTES

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE NP WORKING GROUP ON 25 JUL 23 IN URCHFONT VILLAGE HALL

Present: Debbie Carr-Jones (DCJ); Stuart Davies (SD); Rob Dolan (RD); Trevor Hill (TH); Simon Holt (SH);

Linda Jennings (LJ); Dave Mottram (DM); Sally Stephens (SS)

Apologies: Ken Mortimer (KM)

1. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the last meeting held on 27 Jun 23 had been approved by the WG and passed to UPC. TH

confirmed that no issues were raised. The idea of inviting the Chair and other member(s) of UPC to the WG meetings was introduced. Invitations to attend were supported but it was felt that it was probably unrealistic for UP councillors, with their time constraints, to attend all meetings.

Decision: It was agreed that the Chair and other UP councillors should be invited to attend a NP WG meeting.

Action: TH and SH, as Parish Councillors, would approach the Chair and other Councillors to invite them to attend a NP WG meeting.

2. QUESTIONNAIRE

a). Responses

WG members reported a total of 35 completed questionnaires so far with additional separate written comments from one Parishioner.

b). Time extension

It had been agreed that the time period allowed for completion of the questionnaires was to be extended until 31 Aug. WG members felt that there should be a further effort to publicise the questionnaire and push for more residents' input. SH confirmed he had arranged for a further note in the Aug edition of Redhorn News.

Decision:

It was agreed that further publicity about the questionnaire should be made via Facebook, and the UPC website

Action: TH would liaise with UPC on the use of the UPC website and Facebook to publicise the questionnaire extension date.

c). Doorstep activity

Having done this before for the UWLNP, LJ said that a doorstep reminder to residents might result in the submission of more questionnaires, but it was felt up to individual WG members if they wished to carry this out.

All to note.

d). Questionnaire numbers

600 questionnaires had been printed for the first consultation. It was agreed that this number was appropriate for the number of households and should be used for the second paper consultation exercise.

All to note.

e). Spreadsheet analysis

Detail from the completed questionnaires had been input by various members of WG. It was agreed that this information needed to be consolidated onto a spreadsheet to enable an analysis of all the information.

Decision:

A spreadsheet would be used to amalgamate and quantify residents' responses to the questionnaire

Actions:

- DM would devise a spreadsheet to accommodate the above
- DM would send out the spreadsheet showing answers to the question 1 so that other WG members would be able to consolidate residents' responses to questions 2, 3, 4 and 5.

e). Input from local business and local social groups

SD asked if the WG should consider giving local businesses and local organisations in the Parish an opportunity to comment on NP content. WG members felt this was a good idea, but that a different, more targeted questionnaire would be appropriate.

Decision: A separate questionnaire should be designed for completion by local bodies

Action: DM would bring forward ideas for a questionnaire for local businesses and local groups in the Parish.

3. WC INPUT

SH had raised the issue of housing numbers with WC, but had not received a meaningful response.

All to note

4. WC DOCUMENTS

a). Draft Wiltshire Design Guide

TH had circulated the draft Guide which described the 10 characteristics of good design. He indicated that it was quite similar to the national guidance on good design. It was felt that that a nil response to the consultation document would be appropriate particularly as the end date was 31 Jul.

A Design Statement had been produced by SH as one of the documents to go with the last UWLNP. This might be updated when the final version of the WC Design Guide was produced.

Decisions:

- There would be a nil response to WC's consultation on its draft Design Guide
- A review of the UWLNP Design Statement would be considered once the final version of WC's Design Guide was issued. NFA at this stage.

Action:

- TH would liaise with UPC to confirm a nil response on the draft Guide

b). Draft Wiltshire Council Local Plan inc Rural Settlement Housing Requirements

TH reported that the pre-submission version of the Wiltshire Council Local Plan had been recently issued for 6 weeks consultation. He outlined the details for development in the Parish:

- Urchfont is in the Chippenham Housing Market Area
- Urchfont is classified as a large village
- In the Local Plan period 1 Apr 2020 - 31 March 2038, 65 homes should be built in/adjacent to Urchfont

Village. However, as WC had calculated that 31 homes had been approved/constructed between 1 Apr 2020 and 31 Mar 2022; this left a residual figure of 34 homes outstanding.

- Small villages were listed where “infill” development was possible but Wedhampton and Lydeaway were not listed in this category.

All to note - and look at the Chippenham Rural Settlement Strategy in the Wiltshire Local Plan (p69-71 inc) and the analysis of Urchfont (p76-78 inc)

5. WEBSITE USE

SH felt that the UPNP should have a new page on the UPC website so that it was clearly separate from the previous UWLNP documents. It was considered that draft and final documents should be accessible and that there should be a facility for residents to make comments online. SS raised the issue of privacy stating that it should be clear what data is being collected and how it will be handled.

Decision: It was agreed that the issue of a building a separate section for the NP on the UPC website should be taken forward

Action: SH and TH would discuss having a separate page/section on the UPC website with UPC

6 SA/SEA AND NP FUNDING

As the NP was likely to include sites for housing development, LJ confirmed that a sum would be required to cover the preparation and production of the NP Sustainability Appraisal (SA) /Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). LJ felt that it would be straightforward to gather the information required for the SA “Scoping” stage as some of that researched for the UWLNP SA was still current.

The question of funding the whole NP process was discussed and it was agreed that some estimate should be made of the sum required. A list of possible requirements for funding included SA/SEA; V.Hall bookings; the referendum; printing costs; workshop materials; web page development.

DM reported that navigating the Locality website and gaining membership was difficult but he had eventually succeeded and confirmed that some Locality funding was now available.

Decisions:

- Work should start on building the evidence required to support NP Objectives and Policies
- An estimate of the funds needed to complete the NP was required
- A bid for funding should be progressed as soon as it is possible

Actions:

- LJ would circulate the evidence section of the UWLNP Scoping Report to WG members
- SH would liaise with UPC Clerk on the costs regarding the previous UWLNP
- DM would contact Locality to ascertain the funding bid procedure

7. LOCALITY EVENT

DM had thought that this would be a useful event to attend with regard to the WG plan making, but subsequently found that its remit was much wider and not worth the expense.

No further action.

8. DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT AND STORAGE

LJ reported that no information had been received from UPC regarding a depository for NP documents

(WG minutes – 31 Jan 23). It was agreed that the storage of draft, complete and electronic documents was imperative particularly as they may be required for examination later in the NP making process.

Decision: There would be a system on line for recording information electronically and a system for storing hard copy documents

Actions:

- **RD would set up a folder online, so that information could be recorded electronically**
- **DM would keep hard copy information in a secure location**

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

LJ encouraged WG members to look at the document produced by Locality “Neighbourhood Plans Roadmap” 2018. (Circulated by DM). Pages 7-12 of Part C contains useful pointers to the evidence that should be collected to support the NP. NB p12 tends to confirm the questions the WG has asked in the first questionnaire.

All to note.

10. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on 29 Aug 23 in the Village Hall commencing 7pm.

All to note.

APPENDIX III TO AUGUST 23 UPC MINUTES

FUNDING REQUEST FOR REDHORN NEWS - PARISH COUNCIL MEETING - 9th. AUGUST 2023

Current Funding for Magazine's 915 monthly copies comes from charging an annual subscription of £6 for all subscribers across the parishes and a few others, mainly former residents, who also like to read the Redhorn News to stay in touch with local news and events.

Current provision to Urchfont 550 copies per calendar month - @ a cost of £3300 (£6 for each subscriber).

We have received a grant from The 2023 Scarecrow Festival of £1000 and, in the last calendar year, we have received £700 from UPC. In order to continue to provide and deliver the same quality magazine we need further guaranteed funding from the community of Urchfont as a whole. For many years, we received funding from UPC, The Scarecrows, Urchfont Community Bus. No funding now available from the Community Bus.

Individual subscriptions used to be collected from individuals or a household. This continued until an agreement was made to set up The Redhorn News by amalgamating Urchfont's News & Views and the former Redhorn Team Church Magazine and for the funding to be provided in the way I have outlined.

Other key parts of the merger enabled a bigger, more comprehensive magazine, also allowing UPC to regularly inform its residents, thereby qualifying to be considered as a higher tier Parish Council and also be able to use the existing network of volunteer distributors. For this to continue in its present format, after the end of 2023, needs the necessary funding from Urchfont, Wedhampton and Lydeaway. The decision as to how to proceed in the future now lies with the Parish Council and the community of Urchfont.

Thank you

Paul Scarffe (Treasurer)