

DRAFT Minutes of the Urchfont Parish Council (UPC) AGM Meeting held on Wednesday 13th May 2015 in the Conference Room of Urchfont Village Hall

Present: Councillors: Mitchell (NM – Chairman), Mottram (DM), Donald (BD), Hill-Baldwin (CHB), Gibb (HG), Holt (SH), Day (GD), Thomas (RT), Clifton-Page (LCP) and Stephens (AS)

Clerk to the Council: Lunn (BL)

Planning Administrator: Johnston (SJ)

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

Members of the Public (for all or part of the meeting): None

AGM AGENDA

1. Welcome by current Chairman – NM welcomed all to the meeting which would be her last as Chairman having completed her five year term of office.

2. Chairman – NM asked councillors for their nominations for the new chairman, only one proposal was made as follows:

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Decision
Cllr Dave Mottram	GD	SH	Unanimously agreed

DM signed his Acceptance of Office Declaration form, witnessed by BL, and took over as Chairman for the remainder of the meeting.

3. Apologies: None.

4. Vice Chairman – Having vacated the role of vice chairman, DM asked councillors for their nominations for a new vice chairman, only one proposal was received as follows:

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Decision
Cllr Bill Donald	NM	LCP	Unanimously agreed

SH commented that it was good to have a Vice Chairman from Wedhampton, this is probably the first time this has happened.

5. Declaration of Interests: None declared for Items 6 – 10 inclusive (AGM agenda)

6. Committee Chairman – the only Chairman required is for Planning purposes. Whilst SH has technically exceeded his term of office, as was the case last year councillors felt that he should continue as chairman until the Manor Farmyard development is completed and at least until the Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish is adopted.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Decision
Cllr Simon Holt	GD	RT	Unanimously agreed

RT commented that having taken this decision, there is a need for a succession plan to be developed.

It was agreed that the Planning Group should continue to be made up of the Chairman of Planning, Council Chairman and Vice Chairman plus one other councillor who should ideally reside close to the application address being considered.

7. Representatives – the following representatives were elected to represent the Council at local meetings and organisations:

a. Devizes Community Area Planning Partnership

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Decision
Cllr Simon Holt	GD	BD	Unanimously agreed

b. Devizes Area Board

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Decision
Cllr Dave Mottram	SH	GD	Unanimously Agreed

c. Urchfont Village Hall Management Committee – DM advised that the Village Hall is currently in a state of flux, constitution needs to be re-written and an application for CIO status needs to be made. He hoped to relinquish his role as Chairman of the Village Hall Committee as soon as these tasks had been completed, but was content to continue as the Council representative in the meantime.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Decision
Cllr Dave Mottram	RT	NM	Unanimously Agreed

d. Army Training Estate Liaison – RT commented that he has to date heard very little from the Estate apart from the monthly military exercise calendar posted on the website, he was nevertheless content to continue in this role.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Decision
Cllr Royston Thomas	GD	BD	Unanimously Agreed

e. Parish Trust – NM commented that the Chairman would normally take on this role, but that she would be willing to continue.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Decision
Cllr Nicky Mitchell	SH	RT	Unanimously agreed

8. Internal Auditor

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Decision
Paul Papworth-Smith	RT	BD	Unanimously Agreed

9. Programme and Venue for Meetings of Full Council and Committees – BL had circulated a list of dates already agreed at an earlier meeting for the remainder of 2015 and then proposed dates up to and including the AGM in 2016. Although already agreed for 2015, GD asked why the October date was on the first Wednesday of the month instead of the normal second Wednesday. BL advised that this was an error and should read 14th October. DM pointed out that the January 2016 date was proposed for the third Wednesday of the month because of the otherwise close proximity to the Christmas/New Year period and non availability of the Clerk. SJ commented that a special planning meeting may be needed earlier in January if applications require decisions.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Decision
To agree all the 2015/16 dates subject to the amendment of the October 2015 date to the 14 th .	RT	BD	Unanimously Agreed

10. Annual Subscriptions: to consider payments of subscriptions to:

a. Community First – (Estimate = £36)

- b. Wiltshire Association of Local Councils (WALC) – (Invoice received for 2015/16 = £404.16)
 c. Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) – (Estimate = £147)
 d. Local Councils Update (Estimate = £70)

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Decision
To approve all subscriptions above, subject to those based on estimated figures do not exceed estimates by more than 25%	SH	BD	Unanimously agreed

End of AGM business.

MAY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

11. Councillor Resignation – NM confirmed that she had reluctantly accepted the resignation of Cllr Margaret Simper due to personal work commitments.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Decision
To ratify the acceptance of resignation	BD	SH	Unanimously Agreed

BL confirmed that he will be notifying this resignation to Wiltshire Council (WC) who will then publish a councillor vacancy notice requiring Parish electors to confirm whether they require an election to be held. If the required numbers of written requests are not received then the Parish Council will be allowed to co-opt a new member without a public election. It should be noted that an election would now attract charges from WC unless it coincides with a County or UK election, the next of these not scheduled until 2017. Whilst this resignation had been notified with the agenda for this meeting, it was agreed that resignations should in future be notified to all councillors and officers as soon as they are received.

ACTION: FC/25/15 - BL

It was further agreed that DM and BD should review with all councillors their lead roles and identify replacements for the Cemetery and Allotments which were previously held by Margaret Simper. Proposals are to be made at the June meeting. BL has offered to oversee these two lead roles in the meantime.

ACTION: FC/26/15 – DM/BD

12. Declarations of Interest: None declared for Items 13-21 inclusive.

13. Minutes of the Council meeting held on 15th April 2015 – GD asked why his congratulatory comment to the Finance Group had not been included in the minutes. BL stated that the minutes cannot be expected to include all comments made, but NM believed that such comments should be included for public awareness.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Decision
To approve and sign the minutes with the addition of the following comment at item 5b 2015/16 Project Requirements – “GD congratulated BD and the Finance Group (DM/BD/BL) on the way that they had interpreted councillor responses and structured the Project Priority listing.”	GD	RT	Unanimously agreed

14. Actions Status and Update Reports from the Minutes of 15th April 2015 – BL reported that all actions had been completed or would be updated later in the meeting with the exception of the following:

Action FC/21/15 Cemetery – the following proposal was made and agreed at the meeting to clear this action

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Decision
To hold the next cemetery working party on Saturday 6 th June 2015 commencing at 10am. All councillors, family members and friends are welcome to participate.	RT	LCP	Unanimously agreed

It was further agreed that DM and BL are to assess the work to be undertaken and advise councillors prior to the event so that appropriate tools and equipment can be brought along.

ACTION: FC/27/15 – DM/BL

Action FC/23/15 Playing Field CAT – Emails sent in March, April and May to WC (Stephen Morgan or John Price) had still not been responded to or acknowledged. This is not acceptable and PW was asked to escalate the matter within WC to solicit long overdue responses.

ACTION: FC/23/15 -PW

15. Finance:

a. To report on progress of Internal Audit and approve the Annual Return and Annual Governance Statement – BL reported that documentation and records had been prepared and that the internal auditor will be notified shortly that they are ready for collection. Legal notices displaying the Appointment of dates for the exercise of electors’ rights - Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2015, have been posted on notice boards and announce the commencement of the external audit in mid June. The Annual Return and Governance Statement required for the external audit had been prepared and circulated to all councillors prior to the meeting, BL explained the content of Sections 1 and 2 which needed approval at this meeting.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Decision
To approve the Statement unchanged.	BD	AS	Unanimously Agreed

b. To confirm Community Grant payments to be made in 2015/16 – BL confirmed that the Council had agreed at an earlier meeting to award the payment of only one grant from applications received in 2014 (Doctors Surgery Extension to the Village Hall - £2000) and to carry forward the payment of a grant awarded to Friends of Oakfrith Wood (£500) which would normally have been paid in 2014/5 but could not be completed because of the delay in the completion of the pathway to Oakfrith Wood.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Decision
Payment of £2500 in 2015/16 to be approved as above.	BD	GD	Unanimously agreed

c. To receive a Financial Statement and Bank Reconciliation as at 30th April 2015 – Having circulated the statement and bank reconciliation to all councillors prior to the meeting, BL highlighted the spend to date and year end reserve based on predictions at this early stage in the financial year.

d. To receive a report on the updated Asset Register 2015 – BL had circulated a copy of the updated Asset Register to all councillors prior to the meeting highlighting changes made from the previous year. SH suggested that references to Duck Houses could be removed as these referred to the old wooden houses, a new line will need to be added when ownership of the new duck house is transferred to the parish Council from Redcliffe Homes.

PW suggested that the Council should ensure that all green spaces in the Parish are registered as such with WC no matter who the land owner is, including the playing field. BL confirmed that Top Green and Pond Green are already registered; he agreed to investigate the status of other green spaces including those documented in the Neighbourhood Plan.

ACTION: FC/28/15 - BL

e. To approve the Insurance renewal from 1st June 2015 – Having circulated details of the insurance quote and long term agreement from Community First, BL confirmed that insured values had increased for all items but that the quote was £267 less than in 2014. He also confirmed that if the 3 year long term agreement is signed, then the insurance premium will remain unchanged during that period unless insurance premium taxes are changed. GD asked whether councillors are covered under the Public Liability section, BL was asked to check this with Community First.

ACTION: FC/29/15 – BL

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Decision
Renewal of the Policy under the 3 year LTA arrangement to be approved subject to clarification of public liability cover for councillors	GD	BD	Unanimously Agreed

16. Annual Clerk and Planning Administrator Appraisals – NM confirmed that the annual appraisal had been undertaken with the Clerk. She praised the excellent work that had been undertaken, especially in relation to

sometimes frustrating and time consuming interactions with WC over land transfers/ongoing maintenance tasks and his positive attitude to and execution of all Parish Council tasks and requirements based on his previous business experience. DM proposed that his salary should increase to NALC spine point 21 with effect 1st April 2015, an increase of 5.9% taking account of the recent national pay agreement increases.

Proposal	Proposer	Secunder	Decision
To approve a salary increase of 5.9% to NALC Spine Point 21 with effect 1 st April 2015.	NM	LCP	Unanimously Agreed

SH confirmed that he had undertaken a contract review with SJ, like BL she provides an excellent service and regularly works more hours than paid for. SH recommended that her contract fee should be increased in line with the NALC Spine Point 21 rate with effect 1st April 2015.

Proposal	Proposer	Secunder	Decision
To approve a fee increase of 5.9% equivalent to NALC Spine Point 21 with effect 1 st April 2015.	SH	NM	Unanimously Agreed

17. Lead Councillor, Clerk & other written Reports (attached on website only)

- I. **Farmers Field including liaison with FOFF** – CHB confirmed that she now had a firm quote (circulated prior to the meeting) for removal of sedge and iris from the Farmers Field scrape in two sessions, the second of which may not be required thus saving costs. It was agreed that as this project was discussed at an earlier meeting and budget brought forward into 2015/16, that the work should proceed. DM asked that residents downstream of the Scrape be advised when the work will take place.

ACTION: FC/30/15 - CHB

- II. **Cemetery** – BL confirmed that the work to create a parking / turning space and install bollards in the track had been completed; some further work is necessary to install marker posts and notices. In view of alleged transgressions by a couple of motorists, some additional posts will be inserted adjacent to the concrete bollards to make it quite clear that vehicular access is denied to the cremation plot area.

AS commented on trees overhanging the Bier House, DM suggested that these would be reviewed during the forthcoming working party in the Cemetery.

ACTION: FC/31/15 – DM/BL

- III. **Road Safety, Car Parking and liaison with Community Speed Watch** - no comments made or updates received

- IV. **Liaison with Scarecrow Committee** – BD reported that a very successful weekend with hard work being undertaken by many in the community. The event again demonstrated that it puts Urchfont on the map, raises significant amounts of money which will be distributed to good causes and brings the community together for a fun weekend. It was agreed that BL should pass on thanks from the Parish Council to the Scarecrow Committee.

ACTION: FC/32/15 - BL

- V. **Road Safety Measures, Bus Hard Standings and Flood Prevention** – DM reported that the residents of The Bottom will be meeting with WC and their contractors to discuss the way forward on implementation of flood prevention measures. DM confirmed that a flood warden will be appointed by the Parish Council when resolution of issues in The Bottom has been successfully completed.

PW reported that introduction of the 20mph zone throughout Urchfont (except B3098) and introduction of a 40mph limit at the western end of the village on the B3098 is progressing, Transport Regulation Orders are being drafted and physical signage requirements being determined.

- VI. **Clerks Report** – BL requested an update from PW on publication of the decision on the pathway to the School 'right of way' claim which had been expected. PW advised that the proposed decision had been made several weeks earlier, had received legal confirmation that the decision satisfied all requirements and is now with the appropriate Cabinet member for sign off before publication. He agreed to again chase up publication.

ACTION: FC/33/15 – BL

DM advised that he and BL had undertaken a walkabout with the maintenance contractor to review his contract details for 2015/16. In particular this included the addition of the Oakfrith Wood Pathway, more detail on Paddock Greens, specific details of which litter bins he is required to empty and agreement to use the cemetery skip for litter bin waste disposal. SH was of the view that orange plastic sacks should not be used in and overlapping the bins, DM responded that stocks such sacks had nearly been used and would be replaced with green to differentiate from bins being emptied by WC (black liners).

18. Working Groups: written reports (attached on website only)

- I. Community Access and Travel Plan Working Group – no comments made or updates received
- II. Cemetery Damage Working Group – see cemetery report at 17ii above.
- III. Section 106 Working Group – nothing to report this month

19. Neighbourhood Plan – SH reported that all households had received copies of the Plan policies, 20 had responded with suggested amendments which had been considered, accepted or rejected by the Steering Group. The Plan is due to be completed around the end of June 2015 followed by six weeks public consultation before being presented to the Parish Council for approval. SH indicated that DM had proposed a scheme for change management of the Plan which will go to the Steering Committee for further consideration.

20. External Meetings – NM reported on meetings that had been held with Geoff Potter and a resident about the location of a new litter bin in The Chute from the B3098 to Friars Lane. It had been agreed that the bin should be moved to an agreed position closer to the B3098 and hidden from household view.

21. Councillors' Reports and Items for Future Agenda

- I. BD reported that community skips in Wedhampton are inadequate; BL responded that this could be because people do not take sufficient care to load items carefully and allow space for other items. The skips do take a lot of material if loaded sensibly. It was agreed that an item should be put in Redhorn News asking all residents to load skips sensibly.

ACTION: FC/34/15 –BL

- II. CHB requested action to repair the Lydeaway junction road sign which appears to have collapsed after recent repairs. PW advised that the earlier repair was only temporary for the Scarecrow Festival; the sign requires to be repaired properly by WC which he would hasten. It was agreed that the Lydeaway Junction issues should be included in the June meeting agenda.

ACTION: FC/35/15 - BL

Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 10th June 2015 in Urchfont Village Hall Conference Room commencing at 7.00pm

Draft Minutes prepared by Bob Lunn, Clerk to the Council

Meeting Closed at 9.10pm

A. Lead Councillor, Clerk & other written Reports – May 2015

i. Farmers Field including liaison with Friends of Farmers Field (FOFF)

There is nothing to report this month. Meeting with FOFF members follows later this month; a report will be given on the outcome in due course.

Charlotte Hill-Baldwin

ii. Cemetery

New parking arrangements are reported on under the Cemetery Damage WG report below. However, I have received two reliable reports that members of the public have disregarded the bollards designed to prevent vehicle access to the cremation plots. Vehicles have been seen to drive around the bollards over the grass, unfortunately no details of the offending vehicles or drivers are known. Additional stakes will be deployed alongside the bollards to try to prevent such unacceptable behaviour in future. Repairs to the Bier House guttering and stonework are expected to be undertaken later this month weather permitting.

Bob Lunn (Lead Councillor for this role has resigned from Council)

iii. Road Safety, Car Parking and liaison with Community Speed Watch

David Myers continues to lead the Speed Watch Team. A new volunteer is being recruited, but will not be able to actually join the team until September following training.

In early April, David was concerned about the follow-up to data delivered to the CSW coordinators and the response of the police, so the Speed Watch team took a short "break" while he investigated. He visited Wiltshire Police HQ yesterday, and is now able to confirm that the system is in operation:

- All Registered Keepers who were due a visit have been visited;
- "excessive speeders" visits are requested as quickly as possible to ensure that delays are minimized;
- CSW sends all visit requests to the Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT) who actually carry out visits. There is a process whereby CSW can "chase" NPT if the time between recording of speeding events and subsequent visit is deemed excessive.

As a result, the Speed Watch Team will re-commence operations from 17th May.

Graham Day

iv. Liaison with Scarecrow Committee

Another great festival weekend; not an overall record, but Monday was definitely a record. The weather played an important factor as forecasted Sunday "showers" delayed people visiting until the Monday. Tea flowed furiously, barrels ran dry and burgers were served with better than MacDonalld's speed. Total takings were £39,500 just a little under last year as a result of "wet" Sunday.

A big thanks to all that helped to give our Parish visitors a great weekend.

Bill Donald

v. Road Safety Measures, Bus Hard Standings and Flood Prevention

No report has been received from Philip Whitehead at the time of publication.

vi. Clerks Report

a. Current Negotiations / Proposals

Northern Pathway to Oakfrith Wood – As reported over the last couple of months, the proposed transfer of ownership (CAT) documentation received from WC lacked detail as to the extent of ownership or future liabilities. The UPC solicitor, in consultation with myself, continues to undertake further work to clarify boundaries etc. before the document can be finalised, signed and the transfer of ownership can take place. As such, UPC work proposals to improve the pathway, signage and waste bin provision are on hold until the transfer is finally agreed.

Proposed CAT of Playing Field (Western End) – As agreed at the March meeting, I emailed John Price (WC) on 16th March 2015 querying why the defined long term play area requirements for the School (as determined by WC from Dfe guidelines) did not include some of the existing play area within the school grounds. A reply is still awaited and this has been hastened. It is understood that WC priorities prevented any action on the playing field issues before the end of the financial year.

As agreed at the joint meeting between WC, UPC and the School on 2nd March, I submitted the agreed UPC objectives for the Playing Field to WC (Stephen Morgan, John Price and Philip Whitehead) on 23rd March 2015. I understand that the School have also submitted their objectives. We now await proposals from WC which will form the basis for negotiation of a CAT agreement. Nicky Mitchell has written to Stephen Morgan and John Price seeking urgent action in this respect.

Status of Right of Way Claim to WC – School Pathway – I am led to believe that the WC Reviewing Officer's report has been completed and is now subject to further WC internal review and approval. Whilst we have been led to believe that publication of the WC findings was imminent last month, nothing has been received to date.

b. Meet with WC Community Co-ordinator

I undertook a walkabout of the Parish with Sarah Hanks on 28th April primarily to identify tasks that required attention prior to the Scarecrow Weekend and also during the next WC community action day on 12th May 2015. Heading the list was the need for road sweeping closely followed by clearance of roadside and pavement weeds. Unfortunately WC has now reduced their fleet of road sweepers to a minimum; those that are available are scheduled to undertake specific priority tasks and so are not readily or frequently available for use in villages. Sarah agreed to deploy teams on hand sweeping and clearing of weeds. I also identified a number of potholes which need filling, in particular those in the road by Planks Farm; these are apparently scheduled for patching by the WC major works contractor.

I have also asked Sarah to add a new finger to the signpost on Top Green pointing to the School and to reconsider amendment of the street sign saying 'The Paddock leading to Haggs Lane'. The latter is apparently causing some confusion for delivery /emergency vehicle drivers looking for Haggs Lane addresses which are in fact only two houses on the corner of The Paddock and Ballingers. She has agreed to consider both further.

Ongoing road issues in the Cartway, Wedhampton were also highlighted; Sarah agreed to hasten resolution. She also agreed to hasten action to resolve a pathway flooding issue in The Orchard which was highlighted some while ago.

I have also clarified which litter bins within Urchfont are emptied by WC on a weekly / two weekly basis and those which it is perceived the UPC contractor should be emptying, some are apparently emptied by both. What is disturbing is that WC will no longer take the waste from bins emptied by UPC; in the past this was collected as part of the household waste collection. Dave Mottram and I will be discussing ways to overcome this problem with Mark Goddard when we meet him for his contract review and Village walkabout on 13th May.

c. Correspondence and E-mails – including:

- i. Devizes Area Board Highways Update
- ii. Urchfont Duck House Electricity pillar
- iii. WC Solicitor on Oakfrith Path CAT document
- iv. WC Urchfont Community Day
- v. External Audit notification from Grant Thornton
- vi. Urchfont duck accounts from Paul Bancroft
- vii. Urchfont green space enquiry
- viii. First 50% of Precept received from WC
- ix. Litter Bin location and clearance issues
- x. Resignation from Margaret Simper
- xi. Fly Tipping issues
- xii. Allotment Gates closure issues relating to cemetery access from The Croft
- xiii. Use of UPC Chipper Service bark chippings for Urchfont School project
- xiv. Lavington School 6th Form proposal – consultation announcement

Bob Lunn

B. Working Groups Written Reports – May 2015

Community Access and Travel Plan Working Group

On Tuesday 28th April we had a site meeting at the School with Ruth Durrant, Wiltshire Council, School Travel Plan Advisor. The working party members and Carol Talbot attended.

Ruth Durrant and her team will now undertake a feasibility study of both suggestions, Top Green and the Playing Field. It was highlighted that a path at Top Green might be difficult as it is in the Conservation area and would also be subject to village consultation. Unfortunately they cannot consider the lay-by improvement on Crookwood Lane as this is parking. They hope to get back to us by September with a decision on the Grant Application.

Still no decision has come from Wiltshire regarding the Right of Way claim for the footpath from Top Green to the Playing Field.

A future meeting of the Working Group will be arranged shortly.

Nicky Mitchell

Cemetery Damage Working Group

New parking area work completed and bollards installed to restrict vehicle access.

18 treated wooden stakes have been obtained from Honeystreet sawmills.

They will be painted white and then positioned around the new car parking area w/c 11 May.

Royston Thomas

Section 106 Working Group

There is nothing to report this month. The WG will be making a presentation to the Council at the June 2015 meeting.

Andy Stephens