



DRAFT Minutes of the Urchfont Parish Council (UPC) Full Council Meeting held on Wednesday 9th October 2019 in the Village Hall.

Present: Councillors: Day (GD – Chairman), Botham (MB – Vice Chairman), Hill (TH), Cowen (LC), Stevens (DS), Cottell (PC) – quorum confirmed.

Clerk to the Council: Lunn (BL)

Councillor for Urchfont & The Cannings: Whitehead (PW)

Members of the Public (for all or part of the meeting): Mrs B Potter, Ms N Hammond, Mr M Taylor

A. Introduction

- 1. Welcome by the Chairman** – GD welcomed all to the meeting and particularly thanked / congratulated:
 - The Telephone Kiosk group for the excellent Harvest Festival display
 - All who attended the Best Kept Village presentation event, CPRE representatives had commented on the very good turnout
 - DS on being formally appointed Chairman of the Scarecrow Festival Committee
- 2. Apologies:** Cllrs Cottle (SC), Creasey (GC), Hollyman (MH), Kemp (MK) and Kinnaird (LK)

B. PLANNING – see separate minutes

C. FULL COUNCIL MEETING

- 1. Declarations of Interest** – None declared at the meeting.
- 2. Time set aside for Public Participation and External Reports** – None.
- 3. Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 11th September 2019**

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Resolution
To accept and sign the minutes unchanged as a true and accurate record of the meeting	PC	MB	AGREED with one abstention due to absence

4. Action List Status Review and Update Reports from the Minutes of the meeting held on 11th September 2019 – the only action requiring an update relates to tree surveys, in the absence of SC this will be reviewed at the November meeting.

5. Finance – BL confirmed that the financial statement and Bank reconciliation as at 30th September 2019 had been distributed to all councillors with the agenda. He reiterated his comments made in his Clerks report about the indicated Reserve at 31st March 2020 and the need to transfer CIL funds at some point. It was agreed that funds for infrastructure type projects should be transferred when a qualifying project actually commences (e.g. the Crookwood Lay-By Project). GD asked whether there is a need to notify WC about intended spend of CIL funds on infrastructure projects, PW considered that this is not necessary.

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

a. Clerks Report – BL confirmed that all internal and external audit activity relating to 2018/19 had been completed satisfactorily and without observations, GD congratulated BL on achieving this. BL pointed out that he is still awaiting WC action in relation to the Crookwood Lane Lay-By and the provision of 'pedestrian crossing' signs either side of the informal crossing near Crooks Lane. PW asked BL to copy him in to the latest WC response on the latter.

ACTION: FC/73/19 – BL

b. Councillor Reports

- i. **Use of Urchfont Tennis Club** – no comments raised.
- ii. **Crooks Lane Working Group** – no comments raised.
- iii. **Urchfont Pond – Algae update** – no comments raised.
- iv. **Wiltshire Local Planning Workshop** – GD commented that the 38 shown as built includes Uphill and The Bottom properties which have not yet started, assuming that the Parish target is 50 then we will need to find 12 more. PC expressed concern that Uphill is not yet approved / started and could in fact be withdrawn for whatever reason, this would impact the target numbers. GD also questioned the apparent relaxation of affordable housing criteria which could be a concern locally. TH commented that the numbers being quoted related to a period up to 2036 whereas our Parish Neighbourhood Plan only covers to 2026. Clearly UPC will have to initiate preparation of a new neighbourhood plan in good time to ensure a seamless transition. GD thanked MB and MH for attending this meeting on behalf of UPC.
- v. **Liaison meeting with Urchfont School** – GD had some questions on this report which, in the absence of LK, he would leave to the November meeting.

ACTION: FC/74/19 - GD

7. Village Greens Risk Assessment(s) – as tasked at the September meeting, BL had undertaken a review, in consultation with Lead Councillors, of the comprehensive and time consuming risk assessments produced by PC. As a result BL suggested that many of the assessments need amendment / updating in terms of coverage and detailed / perceived level of risks based on the latest / historical / documented and real time information available. BL emphasised that his comments should in no way be taken as a criticism of the work undertaken by PC, but as an attempt to ensure that all current information is taken into account. BL proposed that the next step is to review his findings with PC with the view to producing an updated document for the November meeting which can then better inform on realistic actions that need to be taken. PC acknowledged that there is a need to update / modify assessments, but emphasised that in some cases UPC has a legal responsibility to manage risks even if actions are undertaken by another organisation or individual.

ACTION: FC/75/19 – BL/PC

For councillor information and awareness, BL then presented a summary of the risk assessments and his comments in relation to the 3 Unacceptable level (grave digging, Pond dipping and Recreation Ground play equipment) and 24 Tolerable level risks.

- **Grave Digging (Risk Level 20)** – this is a funeral director responsibility as stated in UPC Cemetery Regulations, but agreed that UPC still needs to be satisfied that those directors all have risk assessments and method statements in place to satisfy UPC responsibilities and risk assessments. In response to a question from GD, BL believed that general cemetery regulations require newly-dug graves to be covered with planks (and not left open) until burial.
- **Pond Dipping (Risk Level 20)** – Warning signage is in place and UPC has previously rejected the idea of installing safety equipment, there is very little more that can be done to improve mitigation scenarios.
- **Recreation Ground Play Equipment (Risk Level 25)** – this carried the maximum risk assessment score of 25, but is already subject to regular checks by the lead councillor and maintenance contractor. Having received the 40 page ROSPA annual playground inspection report on 8th October, which gave a maximum risk score of only 8 out of 25 (to be reduced further subject to completion of minor repair / modification actions), this will undoubtedly facilitate improving the UPC assessment. Apart from two pieces of equipment requiring additional support structure or signage, all other equipment and surfaces were considered to meet EN1176-5:2008 and EN1176-1:2017 standards. Actions will be taken shortly to satisfy actions highlighted in the report. BL to facilitate with the assistance of councillors.

ACTION: FC/76/19 – BL

- **24 Tolerable Risk items** – it was considered that most if not all of these could be modified to some extent taking account of wording and requirements already documented in current UPC Policies, Contracts and Regulations.

8. CPRE Best Kept Village Awards

i. **CPRE Standard** - GD explained that the intention is to move the CPRE Standard from its temporary location at the Village Hall to Pond Green. DS had reviewed potential locations and made the following proposal.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Resolution
To move the CPRE Standard to a location between the end of the Pond Wall and the entrance to Manor Farmyard, subject to no objections from Manor Farmyard residents.	DS	MB	AGREED unanimously

ACTION: FC/77/19 – DS/MB

ii. CPRE 2019 Plaque GD proposed the following:

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Resolution
That the green CPRE plaque should be mounted alongside earlier plaques at The Old Post Office, subject to house owner permission	GD	DS	AGREED unanimously

ACTION: FC/78/19 – DS

iii. Hills Plaque – discussion reviewed various options but eventually deemed the outside wall of the Community Shop as the most appropriate, subject to Community Shop approval.

ACTION: FC/79/19 – BL

iv. District and County Certificates – GD explained that these do not need to be openly displayed, but that it might be nice to hang them somewhere in the Village Hall, subject to Hall approval. Following discussion with Clare Cannon, GD expressed the view that all old certificates stored in Village Hall cupboards can now be disposed of.

ACTION: FC/80/19 – BL

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

- a. Use of Community Skips** – BL reported that there had been a recent issue where a resident intended to dispose of large / heavy quantities of garden project waste (Paving / concrete slabs), this action had been challenged by the skip owner on the basis that this was inappropriate use of the mini skip and likelihood of damaging his vehicle due to the weight. This resulted in complaints to BL and MB that the resident was being treated unfairly in comparison to others, he was advised that this is not the case and that disposal of such project waste is a private matter. As a result BL has now issued revised Skip posters on the website and Parish notice boards making it clear what the skips are intended for and that they are not to be used for disposal of household project / demolition waste.
- b. Cemetery H&S Inspection** – An inspection was carried out on 7th September by BL and DS during which a number of memorial headstones had been identified as unstable due to inadequate base fixings. In line with Cemetery Regulations, BL had tried to identify the current owners of those memorial headstones but had been unsuccessful in all cases. As such it is intended to carefully lay each of the headstones flat on the graves to ensure that they are not a potential hazard to the public. This proposed action was agreed by Council.
- c. Dog Waste article in Redhorn News** – GD congratulated PW on his excellent article on dog poo on the path to Oakfrith Wood in the October edition of Redhorn News, PW commented that he had received a few responses.
- d. A342 Crossing for Wedhampton to Urchfont Footpath** – PC reported there is no footpath signage on either side of the A342, PC agreed to contact WC Rights of Way in this respect.

ACTION: FC/81/19 - PC

- e. A342 Accident at Lydeaway Junction** – PC reported that another accident recently resulted in injuries to at least one individual.
- f. Damage to Historic Milestone at Lydeaway Junction** – PC reported that Linda Jennings has done an excellent job refurbishing the metal part of the milestone, he will chase up WC for a progress report on full repair by the electricity board contractor. GD recorded UPC thanks to Linda Jennings for this work to date.
- g. Extension of 30mph zone east of Crooks Lane** – Having been asked by a member of the public, LC wondered what progress is being made on this initiative. As agreed at the September meeting, BL is asking CATG to re-deploy metro-counters to determine the current average speed of vehicles following introduction

of the informal crossing and move of the Gateway Signs east of Crooks lane, but ideally this should wait until the promised 'pedestrians crossing' signs have been installed by WC. PW agreed and said that he would hasten action on the signage.

- 4. External Meetings** – Apart from the WC Local Planning Workshop reported under Councillors written reports (attached at Appendix to minutes on the website only), no other meetings had taken place.
- 5. Councillors' Reports and Items for Future Agenda** – None other than those identified in items above.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8.17pm

Date of Next Meeting: 13th November 2019 in Urchfont Village Hall Conference Room commencing at 7.00pm

a. CLERK'S REPORT

1. Update on actions from September Meeting

FC/68/19 – Village Greens Risk Assessment(s) – Having undertaken an initial review (in consultation with appropriate Lead Councillors) of the assessments provided by Cllr Cottell at the September meeting, I intend to report initial findings and recommendations under agenda item C7 of the October agenda.

FC/69/19 – Request CATG to consider metro-counts at or about Crook Lane on the B3098 – request submitted.

FC/72/19 – Request Martin Bodman to use his road sweeper to clear straw from Village gutters – Email sent requesting this, he has responded that he does not have a suitable sweeper and commented that if overhanging trees were cut back in the Village then straw would not be dragged off delivery vehicles.

2. Finance – The Financial Statement and Bank Reconciliation have been distributed to all councillors with this agenda. The accounts are in good order, actual expenditure during the month is itemised on the bottom of the Bank Reconciliation. The second and final instalment of the 2019/20 Precept has been received from WC. The indicated Reserve at 31st March 2020 in the primary UPC accounts is now MINUS £1044 for the reasons discussed at the September meeting, but this is offset by the CIL funds available within the same bank account for appropriate infrastructure projects. Funds will need to be transferred within the accounts at some point to regularise this situation.

3. External Audit of 2018/19 UPC Accounts – I received a report from the external auditor, PKF Littlejohn LLP on 12th September, that simply states:

“On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.”

4. Crookwood Lay-By Contract – A draft contract has been prepared in consultation with the Chairman, this has been sent to Geoff Potter who is awaiting promised interaction with WC Highways on potential road management requirements before we can finalise and sign the contract.

5. New signage on pathway to Oakfrith Wood – As agreed at the August meeting, new permanent signage has been installed along the Pathway to Oakfrith Wood which it is hoped will encourage 'bag it and bin it' of dog waste. New bin is on order:

Friends of Oakfrith Wood have requested additional signs for placement at the actual entrance to the Wood itself, I will order.



6. Pedestrian Crossing Signs – I am still awaiting a response from WC regarding the pedestrian crossing signs that were promised in 2018 to go either side of the informal crossing by Crooks Lane, this has been hastened several times via the Devizes Area Board.

7. Missing Football Nets from the Playing Field Football Pitch – The School Head Teacher informed me that the nets had been removed by the School some while ago because they had deteriorated and were considered a danger to school children. As the football pitch is within the WC owned / School controlled part of the playing field she was adamant that the nets should not be replaced on a permanent basis for safety reasons. This was reported to the Lead Councillor responsible for liaison with the School.

8. Playground Equipment – I have ordered a ROSPA safety inspection which should be completed by the end of October 2019, a detailed report will follow which can be reviewed against risk assessments.

9. Tennis Club Financial Assistance Application – As required by the approval resolution at the September meeting, the Chairman of the Tennis Club has now confirmed by email that Sport England will fund £12k, subject to governance checks, and that an article was placed in the October edition of Redhorn Magazine regarding availability of tennis courts for all in the community use.

Bob Lunn, Clerk to the Council

b. Councillor Reports

i. Access to Urchfont Tennis Club – The Chairman tasked me to put a letter in the Redhorn magazine, mentioning that the tennis courts are available to all parishioners and their friends without having to be a club member. This has been done, and it was published in the October edition.

Cllr Martyn Hollyman

ii. Crooks Lane Working Group - Following the addition of Nicola Sage to the Working Group at our last meeting, matters remain on track.

Final versions of the information flyers and questionnaire have been printed. The flyers will be distributed by the end of this week. Questionnaires will be issued next Monday. Recipients are requested to return completed survey forms by the end of next week, or Nicola and Val & Keith Brockie will call to collect them between 11th – 13th October. The results will then be analysed.

It is hoped that there will be a large response.

Nicola Sage, Councillors Graham Creasey & Graham Day

iii. Urchfont Pond Update

1. As of 14/09/19 the blue green algae count had reduced from in excess of 100,000 cells per millilitre to just over 20,000 cells per millilitre. Though not ideal this is a considerable improvement considering spend involved to date. I propose to take another sample at the end of October. I would hope that we will be able to remove the warning signs at some point in November.

2. We need to tackle the very high concentrations of ammonia in the pond caused by the fish population. We also need to make everyone aware that it is in fact illegal to put pet fish in the pond. MB to talk to Elaine Bancroft re removing some if not all the excess fish.

3. We have purchased enough dye for four further treatments each of which lasts a month.

4. I will purchase Siltex and good bacteria to continue the natural silt reduction programme. This will be put in the pond in the next two weeks.

5. MB to meet with Cllr Kemp to discuss use of Ash poles to support planted coir roles in the pond.

6. The latest advice from Bernice Brewster is to continue with aeration and dye treatment and reduce the fish population.

Cllr Mark Botham (MB)

iv. Wiltshire Local Planning Workshop - Wednesday 25th September – 18:00 to 20:00

Attendees: Councillors Mark Botham and Martyn Hollyman

Introduction

The purpose of the meeting was to:

Enable the Spatial Planning team to update the parish councils on progress made since the meeting in 2018 and provide an opportunity for the councillors present to add any new challenges to planning in the villages. The draft plan for Wiltshire will be completed during 2020 and submitted to the Secretary of State in 2021.

Discuss housing requirements at county and local level.

Discuss housing in more detail in the rural areas, particularly affordable housing.

Key points taken from the meeting

1) Additional Housing Requirements

The planning horizon is 2016 to 2036 and current analysis shows that there is a requirement for approximately 18,000 homes in the county by 2036.

Urchfont in the period 2016 to 2036 is shown as having a possible requirement of 50 new homes of which 38 have already been built

The county has been divided into a number of Housing Market Areas, each HMA has a Central Town which in turn has a number of Community Areas.

The large villages and local service centres are associated with a Community Area. Urchfont is in the Chippenham HMA and the Devizes Community Area. See appendix 1 **

The Chippenham HMA has a potential requirement for 1420 to 1880 homes by 2036.

2) Rural Areas

Wiltshire Council has spent a lot of time and effort looking at the needs of the local neighbourhoods (large villages and local service centres) and the small villages and hamlets

A lot of work is being done to look at local needs particularly Affordable Housing. Previously Rural Exception sites have been limited to 10 dwellings and the site had to demonstrate a requirement based on employment needs and have services already in place to the site.

The plan is to increase the number of dwellings to 20 and remove the link to employment and services. Market housing may also be permitted within a Rural Exception Site.

There was much discussion about Community Led Housing where the community would take a long term role in the ownership and management of this form of affordable housing.

Community Led Housing could take the form of Housing Cooperatives, Land Trusts, or Community Self Build programmes.

Community housing would be available to rent not buy and would remain so in perpetuity.

See appendix 2 for the presentation on Housing in Rural Areas **.

Summary

Wiltshire Council are listening to the parish councils and their views on planning in the rural areas particularly with regard to affordable housing. It was apparent that most if not all the councils represented at the meeting have similar issues to those that we have in Urchfont. It was very evident that Wiltshire Council Spatial Planning Team have done a lot of work which has been well researched to develop the plan for the county. They have employed experts to assist them in developing the algorithms that drive the numbers in the plan and are taking notice of the inputs from the parish councils.

** Appendix 1 and 2 attached to Agenda for councillors information.

CIlr Mark Botham

v. Liaison Meeting with Carol Talbot (CT - Head Teacher of Urchfont School) 23rd September 2019 - The aim of this meeting was to touch base with Carol, discuss how she had liaised with my predecessor, Nicky Mitchell, raise concerns about the safety of the school pedestrian entrance, raise the teenager's questions re goal nets and look at school/community joint projects.

1. CT was happy to continue as she had done with Nicky communicating via email as and when issues arise.
2. I raised the concerns of a family in the village that the gate at the pedestrian entrance no longer slowed or stopped children running into the road. CT took the contact details of the original installers of the pedestrian gate and said she would look into replacing the springs.
3. CT explained that the nets had to come down as they were a health and safety hazard due to tears. CT has no idea where they are now. CT will not be allowing replacement nets. CT would like to make amendments to the current memorandum regarding the playing field.
4. CT believes that relationships between the community and the school have been damaged by the PROW enquiry. We then discussed ongoing opportunities whereby the school and the wider community come together.
 - a. Village Fete
 - b. Scarecrow Tea Tent and making of Scarecrow
 - c. Telephone Box
 - d. Volunteer readers
5. Ongoing issue of congestion at school drop off and pick up. CT informed me that the bus drivers are still occasionally dropping off at the pedestrian entrance and parking on the school zigzags despite being asked to drop at the top of the school driveway. The bus is currently only carrying one pupil from Wedhampton.

Cllr Lisa Kinnaird