



DRAFT Minutes of the Urchfont Parish Council (UPC) Meeting held on Wednesday 10th February 2016 in the Conference Room of Urchfont Village Hall

Present: Councillors: Donald (BD – Vice Chairman), Mitchell (NM), Thomas (RT), Day (GD), Hill (TH), Gibb (HG), Baker (PB), Holt (SH) 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): Brenda Potter, John Chapman

- 1. Welcome by the Chairman** – In the absence of DM, BD welcomed all councillors and members of the public to the meeting.
- 2. Apologies:** DM who was unwell
- 3. Declarations of Interest:** None
- 4. Councillor Resignation** – BD confirmed that Councillor Liz Clifton-Page had resigned due to increasing personal work and family commitments, he thanked her on behalf of UPC for the good work she had done whilst with the Council. As a result of the resignation, BL confirmed that he had notified Wiltshire Council Electoral Services of the vacancy and had put notices on notice boards and on the website seeking expressions of interest from members of the Parish. The next step will be for Electoral Services to issue a formal vacancy notice requesting members of the electorate to indicate their requirement for an election. If less than 10 written responses are received by the due date then UPC will be authorised to co-opt a member, otherwise the full election process will be pursued dependent on identification of candidate(s).

NM suggested, and it was agreed by all, that UPC members should contribute to a small token of thanks to mark Liz's term of office. It was agreed that NM and BD would co-ordinate the collection.

ACTION: FC/01/16 –NM/BD

5. Minutes of the Council Meeting on 9th December 2015

Proposal	Proposed	Seconded	Decision
To approve and sign the minutes unchanged as a true record of the meeting	NM	SH	Unanimously agreed

6. Action List Status Review and Update Reports from the Minutes of 9th December 2015 – BD reviewed the outstanding actions list with the following results:

FC/53 – Allotment Path to Cemetery (DM) – Not yet completed, awaiting response from adjoining land owners.

FC/87 – Remove broken bench from Playing Field (DM) – not yet complete

FC/91 – Negotiate price reduction for bench refurbishment (PB) – in progress, awaiting contact from MDN

FC/93 – Discuss Farmers Field with Charlotte Hill-Baldwin (BD) – discussions have taken place, way forward is not clear. Possibility of combining maintenance with Oakfrith Wood to be considered. BL suggested that a formal management plan should be implemented similar to that prepared in 2001, this idea was supported by Council to establish a better framework for management, maintenance and use. It was agreed that TH would discuss this with Phil Milanes with the view to preparing a draft plan for Council approval.

ACTION: FC/02/16 – TH

NM reported that the Parish Trust had decided to fund a new sign for Farmers Field.

FC/95 – Disappointment letter to Redcliffe Homes over Plot 19 (SH) – overtaken by events, Plot 19 was sold to a new developer.

FC/99 – Try to extend Playdale quote deadline (AS) – this cannot be realistically achieved until 106 funding is made available - ongoing.

7. Finance:

a. Financial Statement and Bank Reconciliation as at 31st January 2016 – BL confirmed that he had circulated these documents to all councillors earlier today. The accounts currently indicate an end of year reserve of £11,374, but this is dependent on all forecast spend being achieved by 31st March 2016.

b. 2016/17 Budget post Precept Requirement submission – BL had circulated an updated budget following submission of the Precept Requirement to WC which would generate a 1.99% increase in the Parish Council element of the council tax demands across all household bands for 2016/17. Actual total budget funds available in 2016/17 will be dependent on the final Reserve figure on 31st March 2016 + Precept + miscellaneous income during the year. Funds will not be allocated to individual projects until approval of the requirement and quoted costs by full Council.

8. Lead Councillor Roles – BL presented the list of lead councillor roles agreed at the meeting on 9th December, but showing the agreed split of responsibilities under key headings which identify the 'first point of call' for the public. However, the split had not yet been identified for 'Pond Environs and Events' and a new councillor needs to be appointed to work with HG on 'Recreation' following the councillor resignation. On the latter, AS volunteered to take on this role. Councillors designated for both these key areas are to confirm the split of sub-areas to BL.

ACTION: FC/03/16 – NM/RT/HG/AS

BL identified one possible additional role to be added, namely Parish Tree Surveys & resulting works. A survey and residual was completed some 2.5 years ago, an update is now needed which takes account of the fact that UPC now owns The Paddock, Pathway to Oakfrith Wood and will soon own part of the Playing Field. It was agreed that SH would assume this role with assistance from AS and in consultation with RT who dealt with the last survey.

9. Lead Councillor, Working Groups, Clerk & other written Reports

Pond Environs & Events – BD asked whether the electrical equipment could be installed prior to transfer of land ownership so that the Ovo supply contract could be implemented. RT thought this is unlikely. BL confirmed that to date no paperwork had been received by the UPC solicitor in respect of ownership transfer from Redcliffe to UPC. BL was tasked to ask the UPC solicitor to contact the Redcliffe solicitor to find out when the transfer is likely to take place and whether a solicitors undertaking could be agreed to install the electrical equipment in the meantime.

ACTION: FC/04/16 – BL

(Post Meeting Note: Email to UPC solicitor sent 11th February 2016)

10. Update on WC matters –

- i. PROW to Playing Field – In the absence of any further meetings to date, BD said that there is nothing to report apart from the fact that the next meeting is scheduled for 11th February 2016.
- ii. Playing Field CAT (Western End) – BL reported that the WC solicitor has been instructed by WC to prepare the draft transfer agreement and submit to the UPC solicitor for review, to date no paperwork has been received.
- iii. Playing Field Proposal (Eastern End) – BL reported that an application for the transfer of land to UPC, excluding the calculated area designated for School use, has to be prepared by WC for submission to the Secretary of State for Education. WC have requested assistance from UPC in completing some of the application, in particular relating to community use of the land and community consultation, BL is preparing a draft statement for agreement be the Chairman in this respect.

11 Urchfont Picnic Site – BD referred to the email from Richard Broadhead regarding this site leased by WC from MOD. Evidence suggested that this site is regularly used throughout the year by residents of the Parish and from farther afield.

Chairman closed the meeting for public participation

Brenda Potter reminded councillors that this site was used for the Millennium bonfire / beacon and confirmed that it is used quite significantly during the year.

Chairman re-opened the meeting

Consensus indicated that the site should be retained for this purpose either by renewal of the WC lease or maybe transfer of the lease to UPC. However, before agreeing to the latter councillors required more information about the cost and terms of the lease. PW thought the cost might be in the region of £1000 per annum. BL was asked to write to WC to gain this additional information.

ACTION: FC/05/16 – BL

(Post Meeting Note: email sent to Richard Broadhead on 11th February 2016)

12. Planning Policy & Procedures Proposal – SH reported that the revised Procedure is getting much closer to completion now that the Neighbourhood Plan has been submitted. TH has been updating the draft Procedure and believes it is as good as it gets now; he will circulate it for presentation / discussion at the next meeting. BL to add to agenda.

ACTION: FC/06/16 – TH

(Post Meeting Note: draft circulated to all councillors 11th February 2016)

ACTION: FC/07/16 – BL

In response to one issue needing clarification, BL confirmed that legislation (Local Government Act 1972 Schedule 12 Clause 12) states “that no business shall be transacted at a meeting of a parish council unless at least one third of the whole number of members of the council are present at the meeting”. Thus for UPC with 11 members the quorum is FOUR. UPC Standing Orders Clause 6 reiterates this legislation. As Legislation states ‘whole number of members’ then the Chairman is included in determining whether or not the quorum is met.

For designated committees or sub-committees with fewer councillors than the whole number, which do not now exist within UPC, the minimum quorum number is THREE.

13. Manor Farmyard – SH reported that there are ongoing issues between residents and Redcliffe homes regarding the surface of courtyards which are considered unsuitable for normal cars. Decisions have been taken by WC on the road layout and marking of the entrance to Manor Farmyard and the junction with Friars Lane.

14. Duck House – discussed earlier under agenda item No 9.

15. Neighbourhood Plan

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Decision
As required by UPC Procedures, to ratify the email decision taken to endorse and submit the Neighbourhood Plan to WC	SH	PB	Unanimously Agreed

SH expressed surprise and a little disappointment that WC have chosen to consult with exactly the same consultees as UPC have already consulted, this will take a further six weeks but is apparently part of the defined process.

16. Grass Verge Protection and Damage – PW confirmed that, unless a grass verge adjacent to the highway is privately owned, then it is owned by WC. The public/householders are not permitted to put any rocks, bollards etc. on that verge to try and prevent vehicles mounting the verge and causing damage, if they do and there is an accident or injury as a result then they will be held liable. It was agreed that BL should include this information in his next Redhorn article.

ACTION: FC/08/16 – BL

Recent damage to the verge outside Rose Cottage in the High Street was highlighted. PW commented that bad driving habits and poor weather conditions cause similar damage across the County. Unless the culprit can be challenged at the time of the incident and liability admitted, there is little that can be done.

17. Waste Disposal Issues – BL reported that problems are being experienced with overflowing litter bins, often not long after they have been emptied, and the disposal of waste from those bins. In the past WC Household Waste collection vehicles collected sealed litter bin sacks from Pond Green each fortnight. This no longer happens. As a result we have had issues with disposal largely because the bins contain dog waste, various options have been tried but found unsuccessful. BL had now found an acceptable solution by hiring a large wheelie (660 litre) bin from WC which will be collected fortnightly and stored on the pathway to Oakfrith Wood, the UPC maintenance contractor will be responsible for ensuring that the bin is put out for the fortnightly collections.

A debate ensued on whether there are enough litter bins in the Village, this concluded that there are. Wedhampton has elected not to have litter bins. It was agreed that the intended bin in the 'chute' going down from the B3098 opposite The Croft to The Bottom still needs to be re-sited, further that this would be undertaken by DM with assistance from BD/TH and RT.

ACTION: FC/09/16 – DM

18. Parish Meeting Preparation (Friday 22nd April 2016) – BD suggested that there is a need to decide on a guest speaker and the format of the meeting to try and draw in a wider and larger audience than in the last few years. This is not a Parish Council meeting, it is a Parish meeting where members of the Parish should have the opportunity to express views and make suggestions on what should and should not be done in the Parish. BL suggested that, whilst the Parish Council report is a key feature of the meeting, maybe there should also be an opportunity for councillors to mingle with the public and gain people's views which they may not want to express openly in front of the wider audience.

Whilst Philip Whitehead had been the guest speaker for the last two years, he indicated that he would be prepared to speak again this year. It is now getting rather late to try and find another speaker.

Other suggestions included a wider distribution of flyers, more posters, direct invitations to individual Parishioners, availability of wine and focus groups linked to lead councillor roles. BL was asked to ascertain whether wine is permissible at such a meeting.

It was suggested that DM should consider the ideas put forward and make specific proposals at the next meeting.

Action: FC/11/16 – BL

Action: FC/11/16 - DM

19. External Meetings – GD reported that he had attended a Claire Perry meeting on the 15th January 2016 to discuss BT and internet provision generally. A large amount of dissatisfaction was expressed by the audience over the services available and slow progress of fibre implementation. GD felt that the BT representative knew nothing about any of the complaints that had been made before the meeting and did little to satisfy questions on the night. GD was of the view that WC had tried to influence and do more to improve the situation than other councils.

20. Councillors' Reports and Items for Future Agenda – At the informal meeting of councillors in November 2015, GD agreed to compile a draft 10 year strategy and plan for UPC. This plan was presented tonight with a request that councillors consider its content, appropriateness and any additional ideas for discussion at the March meeting. GD agreed to circulate the plan.

ACTION: FC/12/16 - GD

Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 9th March 2016 in Urchfont Village Hall Conference Room commencing at 7.00pm

Meeting Closed at 9.20pm

Draft minutes prepared by Bob Lunn, Clerk to the Council – 12th February 2016

SUBMITTED UPC WRITTEN REPORTS – FEBRUARY 2016

a. Pond, Environs and Events.

- i. The electricity supply is awaiting legal transfer of the duck house and compound from Redcliffe to the PC. Once this is completed, the transfer of the supply contract to Ovo can be made and the power outlet box can be installed.
- ii. The last old duck float has been removed from the pond and is awaiting disposal.
- iii. One of the new duck floats needs to be re-anchored to the bank.

Royston Thomas

b. Clerks Report

- i. **Playing Field CAT (Western End)** – as of 3rd February, the UPC solicitor had not received any draft transfer documentation from the WC solicitor.
- ii. **Playing Field Proposal (Eastern End)** – In line with the UPC request, WC are proposing to make application to the Secretary of State to CAT the eastern end of the playing field to UPC (excluding the School required play area outlined in red on earlier plans). I have been sent a copy of the application form and have been asked for UPC assistance with completing sections on 'community use' and 'consultation'. I have discussed this with Dave and he has asked me to prepare a draft response, I will be discussing this further with Dave, Bill and Paul in due course.
- iii. **Transfer of Duck House to UPC** - as of 3rd February, the UPC solicitor had not received any draft conveyancing documentation from the Redcliffe Homes solicitor. This is now delaying the change of electricity supply to Ovo and connection of the new electricity box.
- iv. **Waste disposal from Parish Litter Bins** – Litter bins are high on my list of ongoing issues in the Parish. You will recall that approx. half of the litter bins in Urchfont are collected directly by WC and the remainder by the UPC contractor. Towards the end of last year WC stopped collecting the tied plastic sacks from the UPC bins which used to be piled on Pond Green and collected by the household refuse lorry on a fortnightly basis. This caused a major disposal issue primarily because of dog waste in the bins, an environmental issue. I have now secured agreement from WC and approval from UPC Chair/Vice Chair to set up a commercial contract for a large wheelie bin which will be secured just inside the Crookwood Lane entrance (metal gate) to the path to Oakfrith Wood/Playing Field and emptied on a fortnightly basis by WC. Cost of this contract can be contained within the 2016/17 budget.
- v. **Parish Precept Requirement** – the overall 1.99% increase requirement agreed at the December meeting has been submitted to WC by the due date.
- vi. **Community Skips** – dates have been agreed with Devizes Mini Skips for 2016, these have been published on the website, on notice boards and in Redhorn News. A date for the annual garden wood shredder will be agreed shortly.

Bob Lunn