



**DRAFT Minutes of the Urchfont Parish Council (UPC) Annual Meeting held on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2017 in the Conference Room of Urchfont Village Hall**

**Present: Councillors:** Mottram (DM - Chairman), Donald (BD), Mitchell (NM), Thomas (RT), Day (GD), Hill (TH), Cowen (LC), Creasey (GC), Stevens (DS), Hawkins (RH) and Chapman (JC)

**Clerk to the Council:** Lunn (BL)

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

**Members of the Public (for all or part of the meeting):** Sandra Johnston (UPC Planning Administrator), Ian Johnston, Rodney Gillington

**1. Acceptance of Office Formalities for all councillors** – All councillors signed their 'Acceptance of Office' document in the presence of BL as Proper Officer for the Council. All councillors signed the UPC Code of Conduct. New councillors were given a 'Registration of Interests' form to complete and return to BL for the details to be registered on the Unitary Authority database and website. New councillors were also given a copy of UPC Standing Orders, a clarification brief on pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests and the dispensation covering planning.

**2. Welcome by the Chairman of the retiring Council** – As Chairman of the old Parish Council, DM welcomed all newly elected and re-elected councillors to this first meeting of the new Parish Council formed by the election held on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2017. He expressed thanks and commiserations to the four candidates who were not elected and asked BL to draft a letter in this respect emphasising the hope that they will be available for co-option if and when a vacancy arises.

**ACTION: FC/24/17 - BL**

**3. Election of Chairman (Standing Orders Clause 12a)** – BL explained that as there are two nominations, a vote can be taken either by a show of hands or by secret ballot if at least two councillors request this. TH and DM requested a secret ballot, BL collected signed voting slips from each councillor, undertook the count and announced the result as follows:

Nomination	Proposer	Decision
Dave Mottram	NM	<b>7 Votes - Elected</b>
Graham Day	TH	<b>4 Votes</b>

Chairman 'Acceptance of Office' signed on the night in the presence of the Proper Officer.

**4. Election of Vice Chairman (Standing Orders Clause 12e)** – DM thanked Bill Donald for his contribution to the Council over the past three years as Vice Chairman, as Bill had decided to relinquish this role DM nominated GD for the post.

Nomination	Proposer	Decision
Graham Day	DM	<b>Elected</b> - Unanimously agreed

Vice Chairman 'Acceptance of Office' signed on the night in the presence of the Proper Officer.

**5. Election of Planning Chairman (Standing Orders Clause 12g)** – DM explained that whilst Standing Orders requires election of a Planning Chairman, recent practice of the Council Chairman overseeing Planning meetings with the Lead Councillor for Planning leading consideration of applications appears to be working very well. He believed that this should continue and that BL should propose an amendment to Standing Orders.

**ACTION: FC/25/17 - BL**

GD expressed support for the concept of one meeting overseen by the Council Chairman and made the following proposal:

<b>Nomination</b>	<b>Proposer</b>	<b>Decision</b>
Cllr Trevor Hill as Lead Councillor for Planning	GD	Unanimously agreed - <b>Elected</b>

6. **Apologies:** None – all councillors and officers present.

7. **Declarations of Interest** - GC declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 16h – Pre-School Grant application.

### **Statutory Annual Business**

#### **8. Election of representatives**

##### **a. Devizes Community Area Planning Partnership (DCAP)**

<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Proposer</b>	<b>Second</b>	<b>Decision</b>
Cllr Trevor Hill – recognising that this group appears to rarely meet	DM	GD	Unanimously agreed

##### **b. Devizes Area Board**

<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Proposer</b>	<b>Second</b>	<b>Decision</b>
Chairman (Cllr Dave Mottram)	GD	RT	Unanimously agreed

##### **c. Urchfont Village Hall User Group**

<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Proposer</b>	<b>Second</b>	<b>Decision</b>
Cllr Richard Hawkins	GD	TH	Unanimously Agreed

##### **d. Army Training Estate Liaison**

<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Proposer</b>	<b>Second</b>	<b>Decision</b>
Cllr Royston Thomas	GD	BD	Unanimously Agreed

##### **e. Parish Trust**

<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Proposer</b>	<b>Second</b>	<b>Decision</b>
Cllr Nicky Mitchell	BD	GD	Unanimously agreed

9. **Election of Internal Auditor** – DM asked BL to confirm that the nomination is suitable, which he did as Mr Papworth-Smith has been successfully undertaking the audit for several years.

<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Proposer</b>	<b>Second</b>	<b>Decision</b>
Paul Papworth-Smith	TH	RH	Unanimously Agreed

10. **Programme and venue for meetings in 2016/17** – BL explained the programme circulated included 2017 dates which already been booked with the Village Hall, those for 2018 have not. All bookings are on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month except for October 2017 (clash of Village Hall bookings) and April 2018 (to avoid Easter holidays) which have been allocated to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday in the month.

<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Proposer</b>	<b>Second</b>	<b>Decision</b>
To confirm 2017 dates / book proposed dates for 2018	GD	RT	Unanimously Agreed

**ACTION: FC/26/17 - BL**

## 11. Approval of Annual Subscriptions

- a. Community First - (16/17 = £36)
- b. National Association of Local Councils and Wiltshire Association of Local Councils (NALC + WALC) – (Invoice received for 2017/18 - £380.83 + £76.17 VAT = £457.00)
- c. Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) - (16/17 = £149)
- d. Local Councils Update - (16/17 = £75)

BL explained the purpose and perceived value to UPC of each of the above subscriptions.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconded	Decision
To renew all four subscriptions for 2017/18	TH	BD	Unanimously agreed

**ACTION: FC/27/17 - BL**

## End of Statutory Annual business

**12. Declarations of Interest:** GC declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 16h – Pre-School grant application.

## 13. Time set aside for Public Participation and External Reports

- a. No public participation requested.
- b. School Public Right of Way (PROW) issue - DM sought an update from PW. PW advised that a report will be published by WC Officers prior to being considered by the Eastern Area Planning Committee on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2017. Only when the Committee decision is made can it be challenged by anyone as part of the ongoing process of finalising and implementing the final decision maybe with the involvement of the Secretary of State. It was agreed that UPC should be represented at the Planning Meeting, BD/RH/GC to decide who should attend.

**ACTION: FC/28/17 – BD/RH/GC**

## 14. Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2017

Proposal	Proposer	Seconded	Decision
To approve the minutes unchanged as a true record of the meeting.	TH	GD	AGREED - 6 councillors who attended the meeting approved, new councillors abstained

**15. Action List Status Review and Update Reports from the Minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2017** – BL advised that the much reduced action list mainly contained ongoing issues. DM highlighted two that may or may not have been missed off the list, the Parish publicity leaflet and registration of the pub and community shop as community assets. RH indicated that he had been involved in the last Village leaflet, he would be happy to be involved in production of the new leaflet. It was agreed that DM and GD should review list.

**ACTION; FC/29/17 – DM/GD**

## 16. Finance

a. **To receive a Financial Statement and Bank Reconciliation as at 30<sup>th</sup> April 2017** – BL clarified the detail of these documents which had been circulated to all councillors prior to the meeting.

b. **External Audit - To approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2016/17** – BL went through the statement which had been circulated prior to the meeting to ensure that all councillors understood how UPC answers can be justified.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconded	Decision
To approve the proposed Annual Governance Statement.	BD	TH	Unanimously agreed

**c. Audit - To approve the Annual Accounting Statement for 2016/17** – BL explained the content of this statement which had been circulated prior to the meeting, including the reasons for the significant variances to prior year receipts and payments figures, this primarily due to the Section 106 Playground project.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconded	Decision
To approve the proposed Annual Accounting Statement 2016/17	BD	DM	Unanimously agreed

**d. To report on progress of 16/17 internal audit** – BL explained all documents had been prepared and checked and will be collected by the internal auditor on 11<sup>th</sup> May with a deadline for return by 13<sup>th</sup> June to meet external audit submission times.

**e. To receive a report on the updated Asset Register** – BL reported that he had amended the register to reflect new playground and defibrillator assets acquired in 2016/17. Other assets had been reviewed in consultation with BD and the decision taken to remove the 'Youth of Urchfont Activity Area' from the register as this was essentially a concrete area built in 2005 for £25,000 and had little or no asset value today. The asset value / insurance cost in relation to the Bier House was considered for reduction or removal on the basis that it might not be replaced if destroyed, but it was decided to leave it on the register because the public would undoubtedly expect replacement of this historic cemetery building.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconded	Decision
To approve the proposed changes to the asset register for 2017/18.	TH	RT	Unanimously agreed

**f. To approve the insurance renewal from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2017** – BL presented the quote amounting to £1,125 he had received from Community First for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Year of a long term agreement discount. Whilst he needs to amend the insurance cover in line with the revised asset register discussed at Item 16e, he did not believe that the quote would change significantly.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconded	Decision
To approve renewal of the 3 Year LTA policy with Community First based on the quote received adjusted to take account of the agreed asset register changes within 10% either way of the stated renewal cost.	DM	GD	Unanimously agreed

**ACTION: FC/30/17 - BL**

TH asked about possible duplication of insurance with the Tennis Club, BL expressed the view that, as with the Cricket Ground, the Club will be required to continue to hold its own insurance under the lease agreement which has yet to be finalised. Negotiations regarding the lease need to be resurrected especially as UPC now own that part of the Playing Field.

**ACTION: FC/31/17 – DM/TH**

**g. To approve proposed increase in Cemetery Fees with effect 1<sup>st</sup> June 2017** – BL explained that he had undertaken a comparison review of other local cemeteries because UPC fees had not changed since 2012 and because business rates are expected to increase significantly in 2018/19. UPC fees are significantly lower than shown for other cemeteries as shown in the document circulated to all councillors prior to the meeting. However, his recommendation is restricted to an increase of 11.3% being the published average increase in the cost of goods and services since 2012.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Decision
To approve the proposed increase in cemetery fees with effect 1 <sup>st</sup> June 2017 – BL to implement	DM	TH	Unanimously agreed

**ACTION: FC/32/17 – BL**

**h. Community Grant Application from Urchfont Pre-School** – BL confirmed that £800 had been included in the 2017/18 budget to provide for this application, Council now needs to confirm that they wish to make the payment. Discussion regarding clarification on whether the project is or has been implemented, the final cost and whether any other fund raising events had reduced the required grant from UPC resulted in the following proposal.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Decision
To approve payment of up to £800 subject to confirmation that the project has been, will be, implemented and that the financial requirement has not changed due to other funding receipts.	TH	NM	Unanimously agreed

**ACTION: FC/33/17 - BL**

BD expressed the view that the UPC Grants Award Policy should perhaps be reviewed at the next meeting because he did not believe that service type projects, such as in this application, should be funded – see Item 25e below.

**17. Lead Councillor Roles** – A copy of the existing lead councillor roles, nominated councillors and TOR had been circulated to all councillors prior to the meeting. DM asked all councillors to review the listing and notify BL whether they wish to continue with their current role, in the case of re-elected councillors, or for any councillor to volunteer to take on a new role or different role this year. BL will then review responses and provide a revised listing at the next meeting for finalisation.

**ACTION: FC/34/17 – ALL**  
**ACTION: FC/35/17 - BL**

**18. Lead Councillor, Working Groups, Clerk & other written Reports (to follow)** – No reports submitted this month.

**19. Adoption of Telephone Box** – JC reported that the adoption of the village telephone box had been prompted by 'Urchfont Best' as the box is in a poor state of repair. BT have agreed to refurbish the box, but probably not until later this year. Having re-considered the proposal to adopt the box, with or without an active telephone, JC now believed that it should only be considered by UPC after it has been refurbished by BT. LC expressed the view that the box should in any case be retained with an active telephone for community use.

**20. Urchfont Best** – JC reported as follows:

- a. Working Party actions are all in hand, a lot of beneficial work has already been undertaken by a lot of villagers. For example the unsightly allotment water tanks have been re-painted. JC also paid tribute the Scarecrow Committee who cleared down remarkably quickly after the event.
- b. Two dummy runs have been completed by CPRE judges who live in Urchfont, both recording high marks but with a few weak spots which are receiving attention. They also identified the lack of evidence of community activities apart from notices at the Village Hall, on telegraph poles and one or two private boards. TH asked whether UPC should consider providing community notice boards, JC was of the view

that this might be beneficial in due course but that experience shows that people will still post where they want.

- c. A lot of work had been done to remove redundant staples from telegraph poles, in slower time maybe UPC should review its policy on use of drawing pins instead of staples.
- d. Five large villages have entered the competition in Kennet, making our objective of winning more difficult.
- e. Urchfont is also being judged in the separate Best Newcomer category because it has not entered the competition for a number of years.
- f. Initial judging starts on 14<sup>th</sup> May through to 11<sup>th</sup> June, a second round will be held in July if Urchfont gets through the 1<sup>st</sup> round.

LC indicated that he had photos of the 1996 award presentation in Urchfont if these would be any use.

**21. Neighbourhood Plan** - DM re-iterated that the Plan had been made as a result of voting in the Referendum, turnout was over 40% and some 90% had voted in favour. He expressed UPC thanks to all those on the Steering Group, in particular Simon Holt and Linda Jennings, and in WC for achieving this result.

**22. Scarecrow Festival** – BD reported that the event this year had been very successful, especially in terms of turnover. The new electrical supply facilities on Pond Green were well used. Residents will be invited, via a flyer to all households shortly, to attend a meeting to discuss the future of the event and to promote the need for more volunteers to help. RH commented that not many people in the Village really know just how much work is involved over several months as well as at the event itself. BD also commented that insufficient applications have been received for Scarecrow grants. DM commented that the whole event is a credit to Urchfont and agreed to make a statement at the public meeting to the effect that the Parish Council is fully behind the event and would like it to continue on an annual basis. BL indicated that he had not yet been given the results of the Scarecrow competition for publication on the website, BD agreed to chase this up.

**ACTION: FC/36/17 - BD**

**23. Update on Current Parish Issues not covered by above agenda items** - none

**24. External Meetings** – NM attended the recent Community Shop AGM, the basic message is the need to attract more customers.

**25. Councillors' Reports and Items for Future Agenda** – It was agreed that the following should be placed on the agenda for the June 2017 meeting

**ACTION: FC/37/17 – BL**

**a. Annual Clerk and Planning Administrator appraisals / salary review** – to consider and approve salary / fee increases with effect 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017

**ACTION: FC/38/17 – DM/TH**

**b. UPC Planning Policy and Procedures** – To consider and approve proposed amendments

**ACTION: FC/39/17 – DM/TH**

**c. Email Decision Process** – to review procedure

**d. Speed Watch** – to review and consider UPC ongoing support for this activity

**e. Reducing Speed limits (60mph) on B3098 east of Village and Crooks Lane** – to consider what action can be taken to reduce limits post earlier facilitation measures.

- f. **UPC Grant Award Policy** – To review policy, see Item 16h above.
- g. **Lead Councillor Roles** – to review listing and nominated lead councillors, see Item 17 above

**Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2017 in Urchfont Village Hall Conference Room commencing at 7.00pm**

Meeting closed at 9.45pm

Draft Minutes prepared by Bob Lunn, Clerk to the Council - 12<sup>th</sup> May 2017