



**DRAFT Minutes of the Urchfont Parish Council (UPC) Meeting held on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2016 in the Conference Room of Urchfont Village Hall**

**Present: Councillors:** Mottram (DM – Chairman), Donald (BD), Mitchell (NM), Thomas (RT), Chapman (JC), Gibb (HG), Stephens (AS), Holt (SH) and Hill (TH)

**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):** Emma Chapman, Nick Hughes, Jenny Holt, Max Wheatley, Gill Hill, Robert Knight, Stephen Hodges, Malcolm Smith, Tim Ducker

1. **Welcome** – The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting.
2. **Apologies:** received from Councillors Day (GD) and Baker (PB)
3. **Declarations of Interest:** Non pecuniary interests declared as follows:

TH in Item 2a – Tennis Club, JC in Item 12 – Farmers Field and AS in Item 16b – Allotments.

4. **Time set aside for Public Participation and External Reports**

**The Chairman closed the meeting for Public Participation**

**Presentation by Nick Hughes (NH) on Tennis Club** – A paper outlining the short and long term objectives of the Tennis Club had been circulated to all councillors on 20<sup>th</sup> June. NH briefly went through the paper highlighting the fact that the Club has a lot of visitors but lacks the basic facilities found in many other clubs. The paper sought Council support to meet short term objectives to improve the club house and associated facilities and for the Council to note and consult on longer term objectives to provide an additional multi-purpose court. NH confirmed that there are currently 33 family memberships (2-4 persons on average per membership), 25 single adult and 5 junior memberships.

**The Chairman re-opened the Council meeting**

BD did not believe that the additional court proposed compromised the planned play area improvements, however AS expressed concern that the CAT area is smaller than expected and this would need to be taken into account. BL confirmed that the CAT area is in fact larger than originally proposed, the line now being east of the big tree in the centre of the field and encompassing all current play area equipment. DM, SH and NM supported the proposals especially if they encourage more junior involvement as with the cricket club.

<b>Proposal</b>	<b>First</b>	<b>Second</b>	<b>Decision</b>
To support Proposal 1 (Short Term Objectives) and Note Proposal 2 (Long Term Objectives) for consultation in due course.	NM	JC	Unanimously agreed

5. **Minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2016** – BL reported that he had received a suggested amendment to the draft minutes from GD in relation to his comments made at Item 17ii on Dog Waste, BL read out the amendment. This amendment has been incorporated in Version 2 of the minutes which will be published on the website if approved.

<b>Proposal</b>	<b>First</b>	<b>Second</b>	<b>Decision</b>
To approve version 2 of the minutes incorporating the amendment suggested by GD.	BD	RT	Unanimously agreed

**6. Action List Status Review and Update Reports from the Minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2016** – DM reviewed the list and noted the following:

**53/15 – New entrance to Cemetery from the Croft** – Aster legal dept. have visited the site and subsequently requested further information. We still await their approval for a new additional gate in the fence.

**26/16 – Scout Group** – it is understood that the Devizes Area Group will support Urchfont until at least Christmas, hopefully finding more long term help in the meantime.

**31/16 – Representation at DCAP** – TH confirmed that DCAP does not currently meet, any decision on UPC representation can wait until they restart meetings.

**43/16 – Pond Wall maintenance plan** – SH confirmed that the builders of Plot 19 have decided not to take on any work relating to the Wall, the current planning approval is extant but the conditions relating to the wall are not complete.

**45/16 – Bikes on Salisbury Plain** – BD confirmed that this is not complete.

**7. Finance**

**a. To receive a Financial Statement and Bank Reconciliation as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2016** – BL reported that the accounts are in good order and currently indicated an end of year Reserve of £8.821. On line banking is progressing well with the majority of payments now being made via this facility.

**b. Project Proposal – Wedhampton Well Cover** – BD proposed that the deteriorating wooden cover be replaced at an estimated cost of £329, this to be manufactured by a Wedhampton resident.

Proposal	First	Second	Decision
To approve a budget of £350	BD	SH	Unanimously agreed

**c. Project Proposal – Pond Green Electrical Pillar** – RT proposed a budget of £1000 to cover Phase I installation of the pillar, including materials, by Martin Bodman and Richard Harris. Phase II proposals will be made at the next meeting.

Proposal	First	Second	Decision
To approve a budget of £1000	RT	BD	Unanimously agreed

**d. Project Proposal - contribution to WC for dropped kerb project at Stonepit Lane** – PW confirmed the detail of his email dated 27<sup>th</sup> June 2016 in response to the request from a member of the public for better crossing points for wheelchairs / pushchairs to link up with dropped kerbs already installed for the new bus hard standing. The overall cost of the project is £3000 of which WC is seeking a contribution of £1000.

Proposal	First	Second	Decision
To approve the contribution of £1000 to this WC project.	TH	RT	Unanimously agreed

**e. Progress of Annual Audits** – BL reiterated that the internal audit had been completed in June without comment. The External Auditors have been provided with all the information required and are expected to complete their audit by late August / early September.

**8. Planning Administrator appraisal / Fee review** – DM reported that this review had not yet been completed, but that SJ had made some alternative proposals which will be considered as part of the review process and will be reported back to the next meeting for approval.

**ACTION: FC/59/16 – DM/BD**

**9. Lead Councillor, Working Groups, Clerk & other written Reports (attached on website)**

**i. Manor Farmyard** - SH further reported that the arches on Plot 1 have been completed, the porch will be completed when the master thatcher is available.

**ii. Pond Green Report** – RT further reported that the pond had been topped up

**iii. Top Green Report** – Nothing further to report

**iv. Highways** – TH referred to his report and the fact that the Speed Watch volunteers undertake good work to improve road safety. The Group require the support of the Council to request WC to install metro-cams on the B3098 (40mph section west of the Village) and in the High Street (20mph zone) as a precursor to extending their speed watch authorised checking locations. PW advised that UPC should only support this request if they believe speeding is actually occurring and that WC may reject the request, especially in the 20mph zone because they were used recently prior to introduction of the zone.

Proposal	First	Second	Decision
BL to submit an Area Board request for metro-cams to be installed in both locations – B3098 and High Street.	TH	RT	Agreed – 8 for and 1 against

**v. Clerks Report** – Updates on some matters given under main other agenda headings.

## 10. Update on negotiations / issues with WC

**i. PROW to Playing Field** – No progress has been made. BD agreed to contact WC to establish and confirm what is happening.

**ACTION: FC/60/16 – BD**

**ii. Playing Field CAT (Western End)** – BL reiterated the content of his email circulated to all councillors on 3<sup>rd</sup> July which reported that WC had rejected all his and the UPC Solicitor suggested amendments to the CAT Transfer Deed including the section seeking to protect current public rights of access and use of the eastern end of the playing field (including the football pitch) outside of School operational hours. PW then explained that WC will never agree to include recognition of such rights across (he used the term fetter) any of their land holdings and advised:

1. That UPC should agree to the Transfer Deed as presented by WC to gain control of the CAT land as soon as possible; then
2. Explore inclusion of WC within the currently agreed terms of the MOU signed between UPC and the School which does include such public access and use rights. (You have a copy of this document). He did however admit that he was not sure of the legal status of the MOU.

He was unable to explain why WC Legal Dept had not advised UPC on this position when they rejected the proposed amendments. He also assured UPC that WC have no current plans to do anything with the 'retained land', this in response to BL suspicions that they had.

Following further debate of the above, the proposal below was made:

Proposal	First	Second	Decision
To sign CAT Transfer Deed as proposed by WC without further amendment and to seek advice from the UPC solicitor regarding the legal status of the current 2009 MOU with the School and the potential to widen this to include WC signatory. BL to facilitate.	DM	TH	Unanimously agreed

**ACTION: FC/61/16 – BL**

(Post Meeting Note: Email sent to UPC Solicitor on 14<sup>th</sup> July seeking the approved action and advice)

**11. Section 106 Project** – AS reported that WC had confirmed that planning approval is not required for this project. As the order has not yet been placed due to CAT issues and confirmation of planning approval status, installation timing is inevitably slipping and will now not be completed during the School summer holiday break as proposed earlier. AS provided estimates for additional facilities (Trim Trail along Oakfrith Path – c£36k and Aerial Wire c£9k) for use by DM and PB who are actively examining potential funding sources.

**12. Fly Posting** – PW is content that fly posting takes place in relation to events appropriate to the Parish not more than two weeks in advance and that notices should be removed immediately afterwards. He does object to posters and banners remaining in place for long periods of time. This view was agreed by all present. It was agreed that BL should re-iterate this message and that contained in standing UPC notices on the website in the next Redhorn News article.

**ACTION: FC/62/16 - BL**

**13. Councillor Email Addresses** - BD reported that a view existed within Council that the level of confidentiality of Council business is diminished if family email addresses are used by councillors. This currently applies to three out of eleven councillors. BD was of the view that councillors are in unpaid and responsible positions, a Code of Conduct issue could result if spouses misuse or abuse Council information. TH believed that such family addresses should not be used. RT and DM emphasised the need to use 'strictly UPC in confidence' in the email title bar where appropriate. SH was surprised that this issue had been raised, he saw no reason for email addresses to be changed. Consensus following debate confirmed that the status quo should be maintained.

**14. Farmers Field** – TH gave a presentation based on a paper which had been circulated to all councillors on 7<sup>th</sup> July. He praised the hard work undertaken by the Friends of Farmers Field (FOFF) working group and the involvement of Wiltshire Wildlife Trust (WWT). Three options for the Field have been considered:

1. Focus on Flora and Fauna
2. Development into a recreation area
3. Development of both options 1 and 2 together

Emma Chapman (EC) (A Director of WWT) and resident of the Parish was invited to join in discussion of this proposal. She emphasised that whilst FOFF have done a very good job, maintenance and development of the Field is an enormous task because of the extent of trees blocking ground plants and the problems being experienced with the scrape. The field has potential to offer an excellent facility for the community, but needs the engagement and support of the community to succeed. EC suggested that an on-site public consultation meeting could be held post Phase 1 or maybe 2 to gauge support and interest. TH advised that costs for Phases 1 and 2 will probably have to be funded initially by UPC but that some could be recouped through external grants which of course cannot be guaranteed. Debate centred around evaluation of risks over the short and longer term, funding opportunities that might be available, other options that might be available, the fact that UPC has no choice but to maintain the legacy of the donor, the need for FOFF to start clearing a potential gathering space and the fact that this is all going to be hard work to regenerate interest in a facility which is not best sited in the community or known about by many in the community. Consensus then generated the following proposal and request for a progress report at or before the next meeting:

Proposal	First	Second	Decision
To commence proposed Phases 1 and 2 within a maximum budget of £3000 and subject to provision of a better assessment of costs and timeframe for these phases from WWT.	BD	NM	Unanimously agreed

**ACTION: FC/63/16 – TH in consultation with WWT**

**15. Neighbourhood Plan** – SH reported that the first report from the examiner is expected this week. He also pointed out that following the referendum there will be a further six-week consultation period.

**16. Manor Farmyard** - SH advised that he had not received any response from Redcliffe Homes in relation to remedial works to the driveway to Plot 18 to prevent flooding. DM asked TH if he could ascertain the status of

planning application number 15/11764/VAR, which concerns pond wall and has been with WC since December 2015.

**ACTION: FC/64/16 – TH**

**17. Best Kept Village Competition** – JC reported that there had been no response to the article in the Redhorn News seeking interest in this competition, this was confirmed by DM and BL who were the named contact points. DM suggested that lack of negative responses should at this stage be considered positive. JC suggested and it was agreed that he should now write to community organisations individually with the view to gauging support and suggesting a preliminary meeting with interested parties to discuss the way forward.

**ACTION: FC/65/16 – JC**

JC confirmed that preliminary judging is expected to take place during mid-May / June with the main judging taking place in July in any competition year.

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

**i. Oakfrith Path – Use of Weed Killer** – JC reported that he had visited the path and was of the view that the areas that had been subject to weed killer looked awful and would take months to recover. He said that this would definitely be marked down in any best kept village competition. TH expressed agreement with JC. On the basis that BL had already dealt with the issue by contacting the contractor responsible and gaining his agreement that weed killer will not be used in future unless specifically authorised by the Council, RT suggested that this is the way forward.

**ii. Allotment Vacancies** – The Allotment Association had requested approval to allow new allotment holders from outside the Parish boundary if vacant plots exist. The current Terms of Reference (TOR) limit holders to those permanently residing in the Parish. Following discussion of possible solutions and wording it was suggested that the TOR should be amended to read:

"Entitlement to rent an Allotment Plot is primarily for permanent residents in the Parish of Urchfont, who will have letting precedence at all times. Members of neighbouring parishes may be considered at the discretion of the Allotment Committee in the event that plots become vacant and there is not an outstanding waiting list. If a non-resident letting is permitted, this can only be on the strict understanding that the plot may have to be given up with twelve months' notice if one or more Parish of Urchfont residents require a plot."

<b>Proposal</b>	<b>First</b>	<b>Second</b>	<b>Decision</b>
BL to amend the Allotment TOR to reflect the wording above.	DM	RT	Unanimously agreed

**iii. Wedhampton Notice Boards** – BD reported that the notice boards are deteriorating fast with the doors rarely remaining closed. BL advised that he is considering replacement of this board or at the very least providing a new locking mechanism.

**iv. Closure of Wedhampton Road** – BD reported that the road would be closed for 3 days from 20<sup>th</sup> July. WC have been asked to consider some form of traffic control at the southern end of the Village where it meets the A342.

**v. Invasive Species** – JC reported that he had been made aware of several locations of invasive species including Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam. BL said that some were already under WC treatment plans

(Stonepit Lane and Old School Lane, but he would contact WC with other locations if these can be confirmed by JC.

**ACTION: FC/66/16 – BL/JC**

**19. External Meetings**

**Village Hall AGM** - DM reported that Ian Johnston had been appointed as the new Chairman of the Village Hall at the recent AGM. A change in the Constitution facilitates a User Group sub-committee chaired by Pat Cridland. A vacancy currently exists on this sub-committee for a UPC representative, DM asked councillors to consider volunteering for this role in due course.

**20. Councillors' Reports and Items for Future Agenda** – RT requested that Phase II of the pond electrics project be included on the agenda.

**ACTION: FC/67/16 - BL**

**21. August UPC Meeting** – Following discussion of differing views, it was agreed that the August meeting should be cancelled unless urgent business is deemed necessary prior to the scheduled September meeting. Planning meetings will be held if necessary dependent on applications received.

**Date of Next Meeting - 14<sup>th</sup> September 2016 (unless notified otherwise) in Urchfont Village Hall Conference Room commencing at 7.00pm**

Draft minutes prepared by Bob Lunn, Clerk to the Council 14<sup>th</sup> July 2016

## **WRITTEN REPORTS – JULY 2016**

### **a. Manor Farmyard**

#### **Plot 19:**

I understand there have been some recent expressions of concern made about the height of Plot 19, although none have been addressed to me personally. C'illers will probably remember that concerns were addressed by residents, at the time that Plot 19 was proposed to be re-built, who felt Plot 19 would be taller than Plot 18 and at that time the architects stated that it would be about 350mm lower. When looking at the relative height of Plots 18 & 19 from the access road, Plot 19 does look taller. However when viewed from closer to Mulberry House Plot 19 appears lower.

Bearing the above in mind, I have asked Jeremy Browne's builders to measure the height of both Plot 18 & 19 and they have confirmed that Plot 19 will be about 100mm lower (with each measured to the top of their rafters/trusses using a length of timber and a theodolite). I was present when these measurements were taken. There may be a slight change to this difference when the roof and ridge tiles are installed. Some of the present smaller difference in relative height of the 2 dwellings has come about because the builders have used a traditional rafter construction for Plot 19 with rafters of about 200mm depth, rather than the gang nail trusses used for Plot 18 which are normally less than 100 mm deep.

As communication is my default setting, I suggested to Jeremy Browne that he should talk this matter through with Karen Guest to ascertain if a non-material amendment or a variation to a Condition attached to the consent might be necessary. I have also given Karen a quick overview of progress to date. I have only emailed Karen myself because Jeremy asked me to do so (I suspect he doesn't have a PA and he does keep calling me 'lad')! Councillors may feel UPC should take this matter up with WC but I do not feel this is necessary.

#### **Other Manor Farmyard matters:**

As I have had no response from the Construction Director about the puddles outside Plot 18 I have asked the Development Manager if he might instruct the ground workers to improve the outer section of the drive. Sadly I think that as UPC asked them not to use gravel, they may be unwilling to improve the material which they substituted.

Jeremy Browne will keep the soil border inside the wall trimmed as it is currently awash with 600mm tall weeds.

I have no detail of which contractor will be asked to insert the arches on Plot 1 or make repairs to Pond Wall. It would appear that Jeremy Browne is currently not the preferred contractor.

Simon Holt

### **b. Pond Green Report**

#### **1. Electrical works.**

A quotation has been received from J&M Bodman in the sum of £460.00 plus VAT to install the electrical pillar base and ducting under the duck house wall. (see attached)

As this is less than that received from Gaiger Bros, it is recommended to accept the J&M Bodman quotation. Once the base is installed R&T Harris can be asked to install, test and commission the pillar.

An allocation of £1000 is requested under Phase 1 of this project which would cover installing the base and electrical pillar and R&T Harris's costs for the materials which will be needed. If there is any remaining it is suggested this could be carried forward to phase II.

Phase II would be to install the ducting and a twin socket 16A outlet pop-up box by the Christmas Tree socket. This would obviate the need for an overhead power cable to the Christmas tree and also provide power to this area during village events. Quotations and expert advice are currently being sourced.

Phase III would be to install ducting and another pop-up box on the triangle. This would necessitate running the duct under the road.

It should be noted that provision for all of the above is included in the duck house electrical pillar.

2. Water.

The pond water level has dropped and it now requires filling. Approval is sought to hire a Wessex Water standpipe at a cost of approximately £50.00 (including water charge)

3. Waste bin and fingerpost sign.

Cllrs Mitchell and Thomas cleaned these recently and applied a coat of teak oil to the waste bin. Has anyone noticed?

Royston Thomas

**c. Top Green Report**

The work to make a level exit from Top Green immediately opposite the school footpath entrance has been completed. "Before and after" photographs have been taken which will be forwarded to Wiltshire Council with the invoice from J&M Bodman.

Royston Thomas

**d. Highways**

The Speed Watch Coordinator has submitted a request to Wiltshire Council for metro strip vehicle speed counters to be installed:

- 1) on B3098, just west of Blackboard Lane
- 2) on High Street, just west of The Orchard.

Councillors will be aware that revised speed regimes for both vicinities were introduced early this year.

Previous discussion by UPC has concluded that more time should be allowed to pass before setting up a monitoring programme for the success of the new speed limits which have been imposed at both locations. Councillors are now invited to discuss whether the passage of about 6 months constitutes sufficient time for UPC to support the Speed Watch request.

**e. Clerks Report**

- i. **Playing Field CAT (Western End)** – WC rejected the revised wording submitted to correct a number of issues identified in my June report. Please see my email dated 3<sup>rd</sup> July which identifies

the proposed way forward and need for Council guidance which will be discussed under Item 8ii on the agenda.

**ii. Playing Field Proposal (Eastern End)** – As agreed at the May meeting, further consideration on this will be put on hold until the CAT of the western end is finalised.

**iii. Lease for Urchfont Picnic Site** – As decided at the last meeting I have advised the MOD that the Parish Council does not wish to take on the lease from Wiltshire Council, I copied the email to WC Department for information.

**iv. Redhorn News**

As requested, articles were included in the July edition of Redhorn News on Dog Poo, PC support for the Community Shop and Vandalism over the May bank holiday weekend.

**Bob Lunn**