



**DRAFT Minutes of the Urchfont Parish Council (UPC) Full Council Meeting held on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2019 in the Village Hall.**

**Present:** Councillors: Day (GD – Chairman), Cowen (LC), Stevens (DS), Cottell (PC), Cottle (SC), Creasey (GC), Kemp (MK), Kinnaird (LK) and Hollyman (MH)

**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, Mrs S Johnston, Mr I Johnston, Mrs J Ciappi, Mrs S Fowler, Mr N Fowler, Mr S Arnott.

**A. Introduction**

**1. Welcome by the Chairman –** The Chairman welcomed councillors and members of the public to the meeting. He took the opportunity to congratulate the telephone kiosk team for the splendid Remembrance Day display and the good turnout of Beavers /Cubs/ Scouts who attended the Church Remembrance service.

**2. Apologies:** Councillors Botham (MB) and Hill (TH)

**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**

The Chairman closed the meeting for public participation

Ms Hammond gave the Council an update on the current position regarding her attempts to secure pre-planning advice and hopefully approval for her proposed home for life in the grounds of Carina Cottage which she explained at the September 2019 meeting. Having had a meeting with Planning Officers, accompanied by MB in a personal capacity, she is extremely disappointed with the attitude and determination of the Officers to reject any application in relation to her proposal even if appealed at some point in the future. The main reasons given were that a new building cannot be erected within the curtilage of Carina Cottage, because it is in the conservation area, and concern about the potential reaction of any future new owner of Carina Cottage itself rather than her views as the current owner. The Officers rejected any comparisons with similar circumstances elsewhere in the area. She could put caravans on the site without approval as long as they could be regularly re-sited, but she does not want this instead of building a proper house. In her view the Officers appeared hostile to people experiencing difficulties through disability etc, the Parish Council may have to deal with similar scenarios in the future as a result.

The Chairman re-opened the Council meeting

**3. Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2019**

Proposal	Proposer	Seconded	Resolution
To approve and sign the minutes unchanged as a true and accurate record of the meeting.	LC	DS	AGREED – 3 FOR and 5 abstentions due to non-attendance at previous meeting

**4. Action List Status Review and Update Reports from the Minutes of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2019** - In reviewing ongoing actions, the following was noted:

**FC/48/19 – Quotes for Tree Works resulting from Survey** – SC confirmed that he had not yet had the opportunity to get together with Will Corke, but this will be completed shortly.

**FC/71/19 – Lydeaway Historic Milestone damage** – PC reported that a stone mason has been appointed by the offending contractor, he has visited the site and we now await repairs. PC confirmed that he had emailed Linda Jennings with this update.

**FC/81/19 – Investigate Wedhampton / A342 footpath signage with WC** – PC advised that this is in progress with WC Rights of Way.

Although not a specific action, BL asked for an update on the Duck House / Pond Green water pipe installation as time is running out to initiate the current quote from Wessex Water which runs out in January. DS reported that talks had been held with two contractors to undertake the work and he is expecting updated quotes shortly. He confirmed that the requirement had specifically identified the need to dig under the Duck House compound wall rather than the Pond Wall, included an isolatable feed to Pond Green connections to prevent frost damage and that the contractors were fully aware of the Wessex Water conditions for their connection to the mains supply.

**5. Finance**

**a. Financial Statement and Bank Reconciliation as at 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019** – BL confirmed the comments in his Clerk’s report, no questions were raised.

**b. ROSPA Playground Updates** – BL reiterated that the ROSPA report had identified that a secondary support system was required for the Team Swing to satisfy current regulations and that some additional warning signage is required on the basketball frame and ball wall. As this is a necessary requirement to minimise risk, BL had already ordered the support system from Playdale based on a quote for £544 + VAT to cover supply, delivery and installation. The work is expected to be completed in approx. 6 weeks. In addition he is preparing an order for signage which will take up the full cost to approx. £600 excluding VAT.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Resolution
To approve / ratify a budget of £600 (excluding VAT) to cover the cost of these essential works.	GD	DS	AGREED unanimously

**c. Initial Preparation for the 2020/2021 Precept and Budget** – BL presented the way forward for determining the Precept and budget for 2020/21 as follows:

**Precept requirement has to be declared to WC by 24<sup>th</sup> January 2020 deadline**  
**Proposed Timetable:**

- Briefing on requirements today
- December meeting – initial draft budget presented and reviewed
- January meeting – updated V2 budget presented and Precept demand agreed
- March Meeting – 20/21 Budget finalised taking account of latest information and 2019/20 expenditure

**Requirements from this meeting today:**

- Councillors to indicate anticipated finance requirements and any proposed new projects / costs for 2020/21 to the BL by 30<sup>th</sup> November 2019
- BL will prepare initial draft budget for review at December meeting based on information available

**ACTION: FC/82/19 - ALL**

GD emphasised the importance of providing sufficient and appropriate information, especially in relation to proposed new projects.

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

**a. Clerks Report – BL provided updates as follows:**

Crookwood Lay-By Contract – it is understood that Geoff Potter has now received most of the approvals from WC to facilitate a start date of 25<sup>th</sup> November. The UPC Contract for this work will be updated and signed off shortly.

The promised pedestrian crossing signs on the B3098 near Crooks Lane had still not been installed, he will chase WC again.

The latest version of the Tennis Club lease has now been approved by the Chairman of the Club, finalisation of the lease will be completed via the UPC solicitor with a start date of 1<sup>st</sup> December 2019.

**b. Councillor Reports**

**i. Urchfont Pond – Algae update** – no update or comments made

**ii. Farmers Field Update** – no update or comments made

**7. Crooks Lane Working Group** – GD reported that the survey of residents in Crooks Lane and surrounding area had been completed. He thanked Nic Sage and Keith & Val Brockie for their invaluable support. 105 surveys were completed of which 62% considered a new path from Crooks Lane down to the B3098 to be essential, 23% desirable and the remaining 15% had no real view one way or the other. 63 respondents also took the time to indicate wider views, GD read out a summary as follows:

- i. The road is too narrow for current use and will be even more inadequate when additional homes are built
- ii. The road will be inadequate for heavy construction and delivery vehicles
- iii. The road is unsafe for pedestrians who currently have to walk along the carriageway as there is no pavement along the lower end of Crooks Lane where it joins the B3098
- iv. The road is used by children and parents pushing prams
- v. The current situation regarding regulated speed limits on Crooks Lane is a nonsense. The upper end shares a 20mph zone along with many of the other internal roads in Urchfont, but the lower end down to the junction with the B3098 is subject to the national speed limit
- vi. Crooks Lane itself emerges on to a stretch of the B3098 which also carries the national speed limit. Road markings at this junction are inadequate.
- vii. School children need to cross the B3098 to catch buses taking them to Market Lavington School
- viii. The absence of street lighting down the lower end of Crooks Lane further exacerbates all risks listed above

A comprehensive report containing all the above information was sent to PW who has responded on the basis that WC is already aware that Crooks Lane needs improving and as such the UPC survey adds current knowledge and community feelings.

PW suggested three possible ways to approach the issue:

- a. Put a case to Devizes Area Board CATG to try and obtain a share of 'Substantive Funding' which is considered in June each year, UPC will need to contribute 25% if an award is made.
- b. As the Uphill site will be developed with roads / pavements on site provided by the developer, UPC could approach the developer to establish whether they would be prepared to fund and maybe even undertake pavement works at the lower end of Crooks Lane.
- c. CIL funding will be generated from the Uphill development of probably around £40k in total, this money could be used to fund pavement works. BL questioned whether all of this funding would be available for this project as UPC will only normally be awarded 25%, PW confirmed that the 25% can be guaranteed as the balance goes into a Wiltshire wide fund to be used for key infrastructure projects.

PW also indicated that final approval of the Uphill planning application is awaiting Section 106 agreement, but this is expected shortly.

It was agreed that the Crooks Lane Working Group should continue to explore options for Crooks Lane improvement including the three options above.

**ACTION: FC/83/19 – GD/GC**

**8. Lead Councillor Roles** – BL explained that following the retirement of Councillor Nicky Mitchell (NM) it is necessary to review and re-allocate some lead roles. Debate concluded the following re-allocations with immediate effect:

Liaison with Urchfont School and Pre-School – LK (previously undertaken jointly with NM)

Parish Trust – GD

Community Bus – PC

Telephone Kiosk – MK (previously undertaken jointly with NM)

Community Shop – MH

It was also agreed responsibility for Highways which was previously allocated to GD jointly with MB should be transferred to MH (jointly with MB).

**9. Dates for Christmas tree and Lights WP** – DS advised that he had made arrangements for Martin Bodman to collect the Christmas tree from Dauntsey's School on 17<sup>th</sup> December, the tree will be installed on the same day. In the absence of DS, it will be necessary to decide who will dress the tree with lights and when.

**ACTION: FC/84/19 - GD**

Discussion on the Pond Wall lights centred on the need to change bulbs to soft white LED's which will need to be purchased as soon as possible. It was further agreed that the pond lights will be erected on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2019 commencing at 10am, DS to co-ordinate purchase of new bulbs and arrange team to install.

**ACTION: FC/85/19 – DS**

It was noted that there is a need for all lights to remain on until 1am (25<sup>th</sup> December) to ensure that they are on for people leaving the Christmas Eve service in the Church. It was also agreed that the lights will be on before the start of the Urchfont Carol Service (date to be ascertained).

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

**a. Traffic Survey – High Street** – Speed Watch have asked BL to apply to WC for metro – counts in the High Street and The Green to determine traffic speeds and potentially gain new Speed Watch monitoring zones. The last counts were undertaken in 2016. BL confirmed that the request had been submitted to WC.

**b. Request for additional Street lighting on B3098** – Members of the Parish Trust via Nicky Mitchell have asked whether UPC would support an application for additional street lighting along Townsend which is extremely dark for pedestrians. Currently there is a lamp opposite the garage, one almost opposite The Croft and a third outside Walnut House. PW commented that such requests are often the subject of objections from local residents as they like the darkness. MK commented that a street lamp reported as out almost 2 years ago opposite her address has not been repaired. No decision was taken on this issue of new lamps, but it was agreed that members of the public should report all non-functioning lights to WC in order for repairs to be undertaken. PW requested log numbers for all cases to date which had been reported where WC response had been tardy.

**ACTION: FC/86/19 - MK**

**c. Cold Callers** – GD stated that he had received a phone call from our PCSO stating that there was some social media interaction locally about cold callers who are unwanted and can be aggressive. The PCSO advised that this should not be discussed on social media but be the subject of a phone call direct to the police.

**d. Use of Community Bus for School Runs** – LK stated that a recent meeting with the Primary School Head Mistress had highlighted the fact the Community Bus is now only picking up one child from Wedhampton, surely there must be other children in the Parish who could use the bus? PC stated that prescribed routes for the bus currently dictate where children can be picked up, but this could be reviewed.

**e. Badger damage on bridleway** – PC stated that he had received comments from Bill Donald about significant badger damage on the bridleway leading from the Cemetery towards Connock. This is undermining the bridleway, PC is pursuing this with WC Rights of Way.

**f. Fireworks** – MH asked whether UPC or WC has a policy on fireworks recognising the potential fire danger to numerous thatched properties in the area. BL confirmed that there is no UPC policy, PW confirmed that WC does not have a policy on the basis that policing is an impossible task.

**g. Election Notice** – BL confirmed that he had copied the Election Notice for the Devizes Constituency to all councillors, the notice is also posted on the website and all notice boards.

**h. Bollard Damaged by Crooks Lane informal crossing** – it had been noted that one of the bollards marking the informal crossing is damaged, probably as a result of a traffic accident a few days ago. PW recommended contact with the police to establish details of the accident for insurance purposes, alternatively submit details to WC Highways who will pursue an insurance claim to repair the damage. Does anyone have details of when the accident happened and if police were involved, if so please inform BL.

**ACTION: FC/87/19 - ALL**

**i. Obstructed view from Ostler's Yard, Lydeaway** – PC referred to his report at the September meeting regarding road signage blocking the view on the A342. He is very disappointed with the WC response in that they are only going to monitor what could result in a serious accident by signage blocking line of site. PW asked that the issue log number should be sent to him to follow up.

**ACTION: FC/88/19 – PC**

**11. External Meetings** – DS reported that he had attended the Allotment Association AGM, Although there is nothing of particular interest to report, it had been noted that moss on the entrance drive / steps is increasing and that action is being taken to improve the situation. In the meantime, he had advised pedestrians to use the side entrance from the Cemetery drive.

No other meetings had been attended but it was noted that the next Devizes Area Board will be held on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> November and it was agreed that GC should attend. It was also noted that the Community Bus AGM is due in December.

## **12. Councillors' Reports and Items for Future Agenda**

**a. Proposed Trim Trail** - LK suggested that installation of a trim trail should be considered at a future meeting, maybe on the pathway to Oakfrith Wood or in the Recreation Ground.

**b. Telephone Kiosk** – MK expressed thanks on behalf of UPC to the following community groups and their members who have contributed to the first year of displays in the Urchfont Community Telephone Box - Urchfont C of E Primary School, 1st Urchfont Scouts (Beavers, Cubs & Scouts), Urchfont Sewing & Craft Group and Urchfont Allotment Association Also to the following individuals who have assisted with practical help, general maintenance and or contributions of display items - Jane and Peter Cook, Richard Kemp, Cecilia & Rodney Gillington and John Watson. To date, we have had some beautiful displays, some of which have been provided and curated entirely by the groups themselves. We hope they have enjoyed being part of the community telephone box project and will be willing to take part again next year. Any other groups who wish to contribute next year will be most welcome. Please email [urchfontcommunitybell@gmail.com](mailto:urchfontcommunitybell@gmail.com)

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.50pm

**Date of Next Meeting: 11<sup>th</sup> December 2019 in Urchfont Village Hall Conference Room commencing at 7.00pm**

**a. CLERK'S REPORT**

**1. Update on Clerk's actions from October Meeting**

**FC/73/19 – Copy WC response on pedestrian crossing signs to Philip Whitehead** – completed

**FC/75/19 – Village Green Risk Assessments** – see item 8 below.

**FC/76/19 – Complete actions from ROSPA report** – ongoing – see item 5 below.

**FC/79/19 – Install Hills Best Kept Village plaque in Community Shop** – installed by front door with permission of the Manager.

**FC/80/19 – Hang CPRE Best Kept Village Certificate(s)** - displayed CPRE Certificate inside the Community shop.

**2. Finance** – The financial summary and bank reconciliation has been distributed to councillors with the agenda, the accounts remain in good order. The indicated Reserve at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 has improved to £1190 with the receipt of a VAT refund (£2965) and will improve further when funds are transferred from the CIL account following commencement of the lay-by project.

**3. Crookwood Lay-By Contract** – A draft contract has been prepared in consultation with the Chairman, this has been sent to Geoff Potter who has had an initial interaction with WC and is awaiting response from Highways on potential road management requirements before we can finalise / sign the contract and commence work.

**4. Pedestrian Crossing Signs** – The promised new signs either side of the informal crossing by Crooks Lane have not yet been installed by WC contractors, I will be hastening if this is not completed by the promised middle of November.

**5. Playground Equipment** – The required secondary support system for the team swing as indicated in the ROSPA report to meet the latest regulations is on order from Playdale, their quote of £544.80+ VAT needs to be ratified under item 5b above. I am also arranging for the indicated signage for the netball / basketball structure and the Ball Wall. Councillor Kemp and I inspected the playground equipment in the light of ROSPA comments, it will be necessary to initiate a UPC working party shortly to undertake the limited tidying / repair works.

**6. Farmers Field – Tree Felling Licence** – The Forestry Commission have now issued the required licence to UPC for the stipulated tree felling works in Farmers Field, this has an expiry date of 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2024. The licence has been distributed to FF Lead Councillors and Phil Milanese (FoFF) with the requirement to fully comply with licence conditions when chainsaw training is completed and tree works commence.

**7. Tennis Club** – In consultation with the Club I have now restarted interaction with the UPC solicitor to finalise work on the Lease which I initiated in 2017. The Club have now indicated that they are content to sign Version 2 of the Lease which is for a 50 year period and recognises the need to protect UPC obligations as stipulated in the CAT transfer of the Recreation Ground land. A few minor changes / updates are being considered, but it is hoped that the Lease will be signed by the end of November and provide the required governance evidence for Sports England to part fund the new club house.

**8. Village Green Risk Assessments** – Unfortunately time constraints have prevented me from getting together with Cllr Cottell to update the assessments for presentation at the November meeting as previously indicated. This item will now be added to the December agenda.

**Bob Lunn, Clerk to the Council**

**b. Councillor Reports**

**i. Pond Update**

1) 250kg of SILTEX was applied evenly across the pond on Sunday 15th October together with the recommended amount of beneficial bacteria (600g)

2) a Dyofix top up was applied to the pond on 16th October in accordance with the schedule.

- 3) a beneficial bacteria top up was applied to the pond on 5th November together with a further dyofix top up.
- 4) Claire young will be topping up both the Dyofix and beneficial bacteria on 20th November.
- 5) The water in the pond is now considerably clearer than it has been since March /April. For the first month since treatment commenced there is no evidence of blue/green scum / residue on the surface of the pond nor within the top 6inches of water.
- 6) It is intended to undertake further sampling at the end of November / early December.

**Cllr Mark Botham**

**ii. Farmers Field Update**

Two members of the Friends of Farmer's Field team have recently attended a Chainsaw Maintenance and Cross-Cutting course. They will be completing their training early in the New Year with the Felling course. In December 2019 three members of the team will be attending an Emergency First Aid course tailored to outdoor workers.

**Cllr Maria Kemp**